## CHRIST They book THE

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AND THE

TRUTH, and the LIFE:

Short Discourse,

Pointing forth the Way of making use of CHRIST for Justification, and especially and more particularly for Sanctification in all its Parts,

From John xiv. Verse 6.

Wherein several Cases of Conscience are briefly answered, chiefly rouching Sanctification.

By JOHN BROWN Preacher of the Gospel.

EDINBURGH.

Printed by Thomas Lumisden and John Robertson, and Sold at their Printing-house in the Fift-market.

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## The Epistle Dedicatory

The Right Honourable and Religious Lady,
The Lady STRATHNAVER.

MADAM,

ESUS CHRIST bimfelf being the chief corner-ftone. in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an boly temple in the Lord; As it ought to be the principal concern of all, who have not fitten down on this fide of Jordan, to fatisfy their fouls (once created for, and in their own nature requiring, in order to (atisfaction, spiritual, immortal and incorruptible subfrance) with bushs prepared for beafts, to be built in and upon this corner-stone, for an babitation of God through the Spirit; o it ought to be the main design and work of such as would be approven of God, as faithful labourers and coworkers with God, to be following the example of him, wh determined not to know any thing among those he wrote unto, ave Jesus Christ and him crucified. O this noble, beartavisting, soul-satisfying, mysterious theme, Jesus Christ cratery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, Icen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory, wherein are things the angels defire to look into, or with webement defire bend as it were) their necks, and bow down their heads to look and eep into (as the word used, 1 Pct. 1. 12. importeth) is a subest for angelical beatls to pry into, for the most indefatigable nd industrious spirits to be occupied about. The searching inwith it as our life, is an infallible mark of a foul divinely nlightned, and endued with spiritual and heavenly wisdom: or the' it be unto the years a frambling-block, and unto the reeks foolishness; yet unto them who are called, it is Christ he power of God, and the wildom of God, because the colifhness of God is wifer than men, and the weakness of od is stronger than men. O what depths of the manifold pission of God are there in this mystery! The more it is reached, known and believed aright, the more is it understood be beyond understanding, and to be what it is, a mystery. Did ever any preacher or believer get a broad look of this oundless ocean, suberein infinite Wildom, Love that passets understanding, Grace without all dimensions, Justice the

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is admirable and tremenduous, and God in his glorious Properties, Condescertions, high and noble Deligns, and in all his Perfections and Virtues, flow over all banks? or, were they ever admitted to a prospect bereof in the face of Jesus Christ, standard evere not made to cry out, O the depth and height, the and man were not made to cty out. O the depth and length, the and breadth and length! O the inconceivable and incomprehensing lible boundlesness of all infinitely transcendent perfections! down in it, study this mysterious theme, and were not, in full convition of soul, made to say, the more they promoved in this tops study, and the more they descended in their divings into this depth, or soared upward in their mounting speculations in this the sheight, they found it the more an unsearchable myster? The be considered of other themes (twhich, alas! many, who think it peak below them to be happy, are too much occupied in) when it there both wasted the spirits, wearied the mind, worn the body, and rest ratisfact the brain to the next degree unto a distraction, what sing, statisfaction can it give as to what is attained, or encourage of ment as to future attainments? And when, as to both these something is had, and the poor soul pust up with an airy and arry fanciful apprehension of having obtained some great thing, but it in truth a great nothing, or a nothing pregnant with vanity and vexation of spirit, solish twins causing no gladnes to the louis, sather, (for he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth for work row, Eccl. 1. 18.) what peace can all yield to a soul reflecting ornic on possing-away time, now near the last point, and looking the strong and burnings after shadows and vanities, will tormen his she soul, by also all suiting it with piercing convictions of madness the soul, by also all suiting it with piercing convictions of madness and with the haborious spirit then reased of all the trava cours and with the haborious spirit then reased of all the trava cours and with the haborious spirit then reased of all the trava cours of bits soul, when he hath lost it? But, on the other hand, took with what calmines of mind, serviny of soul and peace thou conscience, because of the peace of God which passeth all un with decitanding, will that poor soul look back, when standing on all sets border of eternity, on the by breadth and length! O the inconceivable and incomprehen-fible boundlesness of all infinitely transcendent perfections! dina

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In of foul, will is took forward to eternity, and its everlafting its poole in the prepared manslums, remembring that there its because will we everlastingly continued, its capacity to underfit, stand that unsearchable mystery will be inconcervably greater? It and the spiritual, beavens, and glorious joy, which it will be boy in that practical reading its divinity without book of ordinances, will be its life and felicity for ever. And what peace an and joy in the boby Ghoss, what inward and inexpressible quiet and contentment of mind, will the soul enjoy, in dwelling on this these thoughts, when it shall have withal the inward and this well-grounded penjuassion of its right, thro Leius Christ, to this the full possible of the tall, which now it cannot conceive, let the be comprehend; the foretastes whereof filleth it with joy unknown the possible possible possible passible possible passible passible and full of glory; and the bope of shortly landing in the beat sing, with the adulterous love of wain and any reft in this endless and restless the endless of should not praise, and any reft in this endless and restless felicitating work, making it to that sing, while passible pa

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in this imployment! What would fouls, swimming in this ocean of all pleasures and delights, care for, yea; with what abborrency would they look upon, the bewitching allurements of the purest kind of carnal delights, which flow from the mind's satisfaction in feeding on the poor apprehensions, and groundlessy expected comprehensions, of objects suited to its natural genius and capacity? O what a more hyperbolical exceeding and glorious satisfaction bath a soul, in its very pur-Juings after (when it misseth and cannot reach) that which is truly defirable! How doth the least glimpse, through the smallest cranny, of this glorious and glorifying knowledge of God in Christ, apprehended by faith, raise up the soul to that pitch of juy and satisfaction, which the knowledge of natural things, in its purest perfection, shall never be able to cause? and to what a surmounting measure of this joy and contentation will the experiencing, and feeling by spiritual sense, the fiveet and relift of this captivating, and transcendently excellent knowledge, raise the soul unto? O must not this be the very suburbs of beaven to the soul? When the soul thus seeth and apprehendeth God in Christ, and that as its own God, thro' Christ (for as all saving knowledge draweth out the soul unto an imbracing and closing with the object, so it bringeth in the object to the making up of the reciprocal union and in-being) it cannot but admire with exultation, and exult with admiration, at that condescendence of free grace, that bath made it in any measure capable of this begun glory, and will further make it meet, by this begun glory, to be a partaker of the inkeritance of the faints in light : And what will a foul, that bath tafted of the pure delights of this river of gospel-manifestations, and hath seen with soul-ravishing delights, in some measure, the manifold wisdom of God wrapped up therein; and the compleat and perfect symmetry of all the parts of that poble contexture, and also the pure design of that contrivance to abase man, and to extol the riches of the free grace of God, that the finner, when possessed of all designed for him and effectuated in him thereby, may know who alone should wear the crown and have all the glory; what, I fay, will such a foul see in another gospel (calculated to the meridian of the natural, crooked and corrupted temper of proud man, who is foon made vain of nothing, which instead of bringing a finner, fallen from God thro' pride, back again to the enjoyment of him thro' a Mediator, doth but foster that innate plague and rebellion which caused and procured his first excommunication from the favour, and banishment out of the paradise of God) that shall attract its heart to it, and move it to a compliance with it? When the poor sinner, that bath been made to pant after a Saviour, and bath been pursued to the

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discovery of his own condition, and seeth that nothing suiteth

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and (ay) did equally to both frame the conditions, make known the contrivance, and tender the conditional peace and falvation : But as toube difference betwirt Paul and Judas, it was Paul that made bimfelf to differ, and not the free grace of God, determining the heart of Paul by grace to a clofing with, and accepting of, the bargain: It was not grace that wrought in him both to will and to do; it was be, and not the grace of God in him. What's more contradictory to the gofpel of the grace of God? and yet vain man will not condescend to the free grace of God. Pelagianism and Arminianism need not but a man to much fludy, and to the reading of many books, to the end it may be practically learned (tho' the patrons hereof labour hot in the very fires, to make their notions hang together, and to give them such a luftre of unfanctified and corrupt reafon, as may be taking with such as know no other conduct in the matters of God) for naturally we all are born Pelagians and Arminians; these tenets are deeply ingraven in the heart of every son of fallen Adam: What serious servant of God findeth not this, in his dealing with fouls, whom he is labouring to bring into the way of the gofpel? Tea, what Christian is there, who hath acquaintance with his own heart, and is observing its biasses and corrupt inclinations, that is not made to cry out, O wretched man that I am, vobo fall deliver me from these dregs of Pelagianism, Arminianism and Jesusism, which I find yet within my foul? Hence it may feem no won-derful or strange thing (tho, after so much clear light, it may be aftonishing to think that nove, in this age, so many are so openly and avovvedly appearing for this dangerous and deadly error) to us, to bear and fee this infection spreading and gaining ground so fast; there need few arguments or motives to work up carnal bearts to an embracing thereof, and to a cheerful acquiescing therein; little labour will make a spark of fire ovork upon gun-povoder. And methinks, if nothing elfe voil, this one thing bould convince us all of the error of this way; that nature so quickly and readily complieth therewith: for who, that bath any eye upon or regard of such things, seeth not what a world of carnal reasonings, objections, prejudices and scruples natural men bave in readiness against the gospel of Christ; and with what satisfaction, peace and delight they reason and plead themselves out of the very reach of free grace; and what work there is to get a poor soul, in any measure wakned and convinced of its lost condition, wrought up to a compliance with the gospel-oway of salvation? How many other designs, projects and esfays doth it follows, with a piece of natural vehemency and feriousness, without overrying, were it even to the weating of its body and spirits, let be its substance and riches, before it be

brought to a clofing with a crucified Mediator, and to an accounting of all its former workings, attainments, and painful labourings, and gain, as loss for Christ, and for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and as dung that it may win Christ, and be found in him, not having its own righteoutness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith? Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. And may it not feem ftrange, that now, after fo many have found, thro' the grace of God, the sweet experience of the gracious workings of the gospel-grace of God upon their bearts, and so are in case, as baving this witness within them, to give verdict against those affertions; yea, mo and many mo than were in Jeveral ages before; yet Saran should become so bold, as to vent these desperate opinions, so diametrically opposite to the grace of God, declared in the gospel, and ingraven in the hearts of many bundreds by the finger of God, confirming, in the most undoubted manner, the truth of the gospel doctrines. This would seem to say, that there are such clear sun-spine days of the gospel, and of the Son of man, a-coming (and who can tell bow soon this night shall be at an end?) that all these doctrines of nature shall receive a more conspicuous and mameful das than they have received for thefe many ages. Hithertil, when Satan raifed up and fent forth his qualified instruments for this desperate work, God always prepared carpenters to fright thefe horns; and thus gospel-truth came forth, as gold out of a furnace, more clear and Bining: And who can tell but there may be a dispensation of the pure grace of God, in opposition to these perverting ways of Satan, yet to come, that, as to the measure of light and power, hall excel whatever bath been fince the apostles days? Even fo, come, Lord Jefus.

However, Madam, the grace of God will be what it is to all the chosen and ransomed ones; they will find that in it, which will make whatever cometh in competition therewith, or would darken it, contemptible in their eyes: And happy they, of autom, in this day wherein darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the people, it may be said, The Lord hath arisen upon them, and his glory bath been seen upon them. For whatever others, whose understanding is yet darkned, and they alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, imagine of the gospel-grace, and bowever they discern nothing of the heavenly and spiritual glory of the grace of God; yet they being delivered, or cast into the form and mould of the doctrine of the cofpel, which they have obeyed from the heart, thro' the powerful and irrefiftible efficacy of the mighty grace of God, have seen such an alluring excellency The Epiffle Dedicatory.

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cellency in that gracious contrivance of infinite wildom, to let forth the unparallelableness of the pure grace of God, and are daily seeing more and more of the graciousness and wisdoms of that heavenly invention, in its adequate suitableness to all their necessities, that as they cannot but admire and commend the riches of that grace that interlineth every sentence of the gospel, and the greatness of that love, that hath made such a compleatly broad plaister to cover all their sories and wounds; so the longer they live, and the more they drink of this pure fountain of heavenly nectar, and the more their necessities press them to a taking on of new obligations because of new supplies from this ocean of grace, the more they are made to admire the stifdom and goodness of the Author, and the more they are made to fall in love with, to delight, and lofe themfelves in the thoughts of, this incomprehensible grace of God; yea, and to long to be there, where they hall be in better case to contemplate, and have more wit to wonder at, and better dexterity to prize, and a stronger head to muse upon, and a more enlarged beart to praise for, this boundless and endless treasure of the grace of God, with which they are enriched, thro' Jesus Christ. Sure, if we be not thus enamoured and ravified with it, it is because we are yet flanding without, or, at most, upon the threshold and border of this grace; were we once got within the jurisdiction of grace, and had yielded up ourselves unto the power thereof, and were living and breathing in this air, O how sweet a life might we have! what a kindly element would grace be to us! As fin had reigned unto death, even so grace fould reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 5, 21. Grace reigning within us thro' righteoufnest. awould frame and fit our souls for that eternal life that is enfured to all who come once under the commanding, enlivening, firengthning, confirming, corroborating and perfecting power of grace; and feeking grace for grace, and so living and walking and pending upon grace's cost and charges : O bow lively and thriving proficients might we be! The more we fpent of grace (if it could be spent) the richer sould we be in grace: O what an enriching trade must it be to trade with free grace, where there is no loss, and all is gain! The flock and gain and all is ensured; yea more, labouring in grace's field would bring us in Isaac's bleffing, an bundred-fold: But, alas! # is one thing to talk of grace, but a far other thing to trade with grace. When we are so great strangers unto the life of grace, thro' not breathing in the air of grace; bow can the name of the Lord Jesus Chrst be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jefus Christ? 2 Theff. 1, 12. Consider we what an affront and indignity

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dignity it is unto the Lord dispensator of grace, that we look so lean and ill-favoured, as if there were not enough of the fatning bread of the grace of God in our Father's boufe, or as if the great Steward, who is full of grace and truth, were unwilling to bestow it upon us, or grudged us of our allowance, when the fault is in ourselves. We will not follow the course that wife grace, and gracious wisdom bath prescribed; we will not open our mouth wide, that he might fill us ; nor go to him with our narrowed or closed mouths, that grace might make way for grace, and widen the mouth for receiving of more grace; but ly by in our leanness and weakness: and, alas, we love too well to be fo. O but grace be ill-wared on us, who carry so unaworthily with it, as we do! yet it is well with the gracious foul, that he is under grace's tutory and care; for grace will care for him, when he careth not much for it, nor yet feeth well to his own welfare: Grace can and will prevent, yea, must prevent, afterward, as well as at the first; that grace may be grace, and appear to be grace, and continue unchangeably to be grace, and so free grace. Well is it with the heliever, whom grace bath once taken by the heart, and brought within the bond of the covenant of grace; its deadest condition is not desperate: when corruption prevailet to such an height, that the man is given over for dead, there being no sense, no motion, no warmth, no breath almost to be observed; yet grace, when violently constrained by that strong distemper to retire to a secret corner of the soul, and there to lurk and ly quiet; will yet at length, thro' the quickning and reviving influences of grace promifed in the covenant, and granzed in the Lord's good time, come out of its prison, take the fields, and recover the empire of the foul; and then the dry and withered flock, when the God of all grace will be as the dew unto Ifrael, shall blossom and grow as the lily, and calt forth his roots as Lebanon: his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. It is a happy thing, either for church or particular foul, to be planted in grace's sappy soil; they ly open to the warm beams of the Sun of righteousness: and tho' winter-blasts may be harp and long, clouds may intercept the heat, and nipping frosts may cause a sad decay, and all the sap may return and ly as it were dormant in the root; yet the winter will pass, the rain will be over and gone, and the flowers will appear on' the earth; the time of finging of birds will come, and the voice of the turtle will be heard in the land: then shall even the wilderness and solitary place be glad, and the defert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and finging: the glory of Lebanon fhall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel andThe Epiftle Dedicatory.

and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. We wonder that 'tis not always'. bot summer-days, a flourishing and fruitful season, with souls and with churches; but, know we the thoughts of the Lord? See we to the bottom of the deep contrivances of infinite wifdom? Know we the usefulness, yea necessity, of long winternights, formy blafts, bail, rain, Inow and froft? Consider we, that our state and condition, while here, calleth for those ofcissitudes, and requireth the blowing of the north as well as of the fouth winds? If we considered how grace had ordered all things for our best, and most for the glory and exaltation of grace, we would fit down and fing under the laddest of difpensations, and, living by faith and hope, we would rejoice in the confident expectation of a gracious outgate: for as long as grace predomineth (and that will be until glory take the empire) all will run in the chanel of grace. And the now fenfe (which is oft faith's unfaithful friend) will be always sug-gesting false tales of God and of his grace unto unbelief, and raising thereby discontents, doubts, fears, jealousies, and many distempers in the foul, to its prejudice and burt; yet in end grace shall be seen to be grace, and the faithful shall get such: a full fight of this manifold grace, as ordering, tempering, timing, foortning or continuing of all the (ad and difmul days and seasons that have passed over their own or their mother's head, that they fall fee that grace did order all, yea, every circumstance of all the various tossings, changes, ups and downs, that they did meet with. And O what a satisfying fight will that be, when the general affembly and church of the first-born which are involled in heaven, and every individual faint, shall come together, and take a view of all their experiences, the refult of which shall be, grace began, grace carried on, and grace bath perfected all, grace was at the bottom of all, and grace crowned all! What boutings, Grace, grace unto it, will be there, when the head-stone shall be brought forth? What foul-fatisfying complacency in, and admiration at, all that is past, will a back-look thereat yield, when every one shall be made to fay, Grace bath done all well, not a pin of all the work of grace in and about me might have been wanted; now I fee, that the work of God is perfect, grace was glorious prace, and wife grace, whatever I thought of it then; O what a fool bave I been, in quarrelling at, and in not being fully satisfied with, all that grace was doing with me? O how

little is this believed now!

In confidence, Madam, that your Ladyship (to me nowise known, but by a savoury report) shall accept of this hold address, I recommend your Ladyship, my very noble Lord your Husband, and offspring, to the word of his grace, and subscribe myself your and their servant in the gospel of the grace of God,

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Christian Reader,

F thou answer this defignation, and art really a partaker of the unction, which is the high import of that bleffed and glorious name called upon thee, thine eye must affect thy heart, and a soul swelled with godly forrow must at last burst and bleed forth at a weeping eye, while thou looks upon most of this licentious and lothform generation, arrived at that height of prodigious profanity, as to glory in their shame, and boast of bearing the very badge and black mark of damnation. But, besides this swarm, who savage it to hell, and make such hafte thither, as they fome themselves into everlasting flames, carrying, under the shape and visage of men, as devils in difguife; the face of the church is covered with a scum of such, who are so immersed in the concerns of this life, and are so intense in the pursuit of the pleasures, gain and honours thereof, as their way doth manifestly witness them to be funk into the deep oblivion of God, and desperate inconfideration of their precious and immortal fouls. But, in the third place, besides these who are hurried into fuch a distraction with the cares of this life, that they, as natural brute beafts made to be taken and deftroyed, are never at leifure to confider either the nature and necessity of their noble fouls, or to converfe with the notion of a Deity; thou may perceive a company of felf-deceiving speculatists, who make broad the phylacteries of their garments, and boaft of fome high attainments in religion; yea, would have others look upon them as arrived at the very porch of heaven, and advanced to a high pitch of proficiency in the ways of God, because they can discourse a little of the mysteries of salvation, and, without ever diving further into the depth and true nature of Religion, dream themselves into a confideration of being faints, and conclude themselves candidates for glory.

This is that heart-moving object, which presents itself to thy eye and observation this day: this is that deplorable posture, wherein thou mayst perceive most men at the very point of perishing eternally, who are within the pale of the visible church; some dancing themselves headlong in all haste into the lake of fire and brimstone; some so much concerned in things which have no connexion with their happiness, as to drop inconcernedly into the pit, out of which there is no redemption; and others dreaming themselves

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nto endless perdition, and all of them unite in a detiding

o their recovery.

Now, while religion (which is the beauty of the foul. nd the basis of man's blessedness, advancing him both to conformity to God, and qualifying him for the fruition of him) by the generality of thosecalled to be faints (that they may be faved) is not only upon deliberation and choice laid. aside, as having nothing in it to recommend and endear it to the fouls of men, but hated, flouted, fled from, and forfaken, as if it came on purpose to mar mens tranquillity, and torment them before the time; while, Ffay, it is thus, some faithful servants, who make conscience to carry on his work, who came to destroy the works of the devil, and went about, while in the world, healing all that were oppreffed of him, fet themselves to pray, preach and perswade the things concerning the kingdom of God, yea, to write and warn, and weep men into a compliance with their own happiness they endeavour folicitously to inform mens minds, that they may reform their manners, and refcue: them with fear, who are running upon their own ruin; but, alas, with so little success, that they do the work of the Lord with grief, and have much forrow of those, of whom they ought to have joy: and after all their befeechings, obtestings, requestings and cryings, This is the way, walk ye in it; turn you, turn, Oh! why will you die? have this. as the last return to all their importunities, Nay, there is no hope; (peak no more to us of that matter; do not offer to perswade us to relinquish the old road, or disswade us from following our lovers: for, when ye have done all, after these we will go : we resolve to abide what we have been, children of imperswasion.

But, if his servants, in following their work clossy, seem to have gained a little ground upon men, and almost perswaded them to be christians, Satan, to the end he may make all miscarry, and counter-work these workers together with God, and poison poor souls, by a perversion of the Gospel, beyond the power of an antidote, hath raised up, instigate, and set on work a race of proud Rationalists (for they are wifer than to class themselves amongst shose poor fools, those base things, those nothings, to whom Christ is made all things, to whom Christ is made wisdom, that he may be rightcousness, sanctification and redemption to them, nay, they must be wise men after the fiesh, wise above what is written: a crucified Christ is really unto them soolishness and weakness, the the power of God and the wissom of God) they will needs go to work another

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XVI way; they will needs glory in his presence; and have a heaven of their own hand-win (O my foul, enter not into their fecrets! and, O sweet Jesus, let thy name be to me, The Lord my righteousness; thou hast won it, wear it; and gather not my foul with fuch who make mention of any other righteousness but of thine only , to bring in another gospel amongst men than the gospel of the grace of God, As they determine to know some other thing than Christ and him crucified; so, with the inticing words of man's wisdom, they bewitch men into a disobedience to the truth, fetting somewhat else before them than a crucified Christ: And this they do, that they may remove men from those who call them into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel. A Christ, it is true, they speak of; but it is not the Christ of God: for all they drive at (O curled and truly antichristian design!) is, that he may profit them nothing, while they model all religion according to this novel project of their magnified morality. This is that which gives both life and luftre to that image they adore, to the Dagon after whom they would have the world wonder and worship.

That there is such a moralizing or muddizing (if I may be for once admitted to coin a new word to give these men their due) of Christianity now introduced and coming in fashion, many of the late pieces in request do evince. Now, that Christianity should moralize men above all things, I both give and grant; for he who is partaker of the divine nature, and hath obtained precious faith, must add virtue to his faith: But that it should be only conceived and conceited as an elevation of nature to a more clear light in the matter of morality, wherein our Lord is only respected as an heavenly teacher, and perfect pattern proposed for imitation, is but a proud pleasing fancy of felf-conceited, darkned and deluded dreamers, robbing God of the glory of his mercy and goodness, our Lord Jesus Christ of the glory of his grace and merit, the Spirit of the efficacy of his glorious and mighty operations, and themselves and their pilgrims, who give them the hand as guides, of the comfort and fruit of all.

This is the pilgrimage we are perswaded to undertake to the holy land; this is that reasonableness of Christianity, which with great swelling words of vanity is ventilate, to the alluring and enfnaring of fuch who had almost escaped the corruption which is in the world thro' lust, and the pollutions of the flesh thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jefus Christ; this is the way which they, who undertake to publish to the world the true causes of the decay of picty, take to revive and introduce that plety which they complain is wanting: O impious invention! not only in-

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croaching upon the unsearchable mystery of the gospel, but subversive of the whole method, and blessed and beautiful contrivance of falvation, and rendering falvation impossible to the greatest proficients in this study; and the grand patrons and practitioners in this new art, the greatest opposers of that grace of God, which bringeth falvation unto all men. It is true, they will not plainly plead for profanity; nay, they may and do make a great noise about the practice of piety, as if they were the only patrons thereof, that with less observation and great facility they may beguile them-They may pollibly selves and their followers of the reward. perswade even to a pinching of the body, that they may puff up, and pamper their fleshly mind; and while they over-drive men to the practice of will-worship, and performance of those things which have a shew of wisdom, it is that they may withdraw them from holding that bleffed Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God: yet the grace of God, that only living principle of all true piety, which they dispute out of the fouls of men, that they may debauch them into a contempt of the Spirit's working in men to will and to do, takes frequent vengeance on this their invention, by leaving them not only to play the devil in difguife, that they may be known by their fruits; but also to lay aside that garb of external godliness (for the devil nor his domesticks cannot long wear a strait doublet) that it may appear how it is verified in them, From him that bath not, fall be taken away even that he bath; which is so plain, that to many of these pleaders for this new way, and their profelytes, in the righteous judgment of God, it happeneth according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the fow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.

It cannot escape thy observation, how busy Satan is this day, upon the one hand, to keep men, under the call of the gospel to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, idle all the day; so that no persuasion can induce them to engage seriously to fall about aworking out their own salvation in fear and trembling; and, on the other, equally diligent and industrious to divert men from trusting in the name of the Lord, and staying upon their God; setting them on work to go and gather sewel, and kindle a fire, and compass themselves about with sparks, that they may walk in the light of their own fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled; knowing well that they shall this way most certainly lose their toil and travel, and have no other reward at his hand of all their labour, but to ly down in everlasting sor-

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row, while the stout-hearted, and far from righteousness and falvation, shall get their soul for a prey, and be made to rejoice in his falvation, and bless him who hath made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints

It is fit therefore, in order to thy own establishment in the present truth, and that thou mayst so work that thy labour be not in vain, but God may accept thy works, often to think, and seriously to consider in thy own soul, what that gospel-holiness is, and what these men substitute in the place of it, that shou may choose the perfect and pleasant way of gospel-holiness, and exercise thyself to that godliness, which is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come:

I am neither the fit person for so great an undertaking, not do these limits within which I must bound myself permit me to expatiate in many notions about the nature of this excellent and precious thing, true gospel-holiness: Oh if, in the entry, I could, on my own behalf and others, lob out my alai, from the borrom of my foul, because, be what it will, it is some other thing than men take it to be! few habituate themselves to a thinking upon it, in its high nature, and foul-enriching advantages, till their hearts receive fuitable impressions of it, and their lives be the very tranfumpt of the law of God written in their heart; the thing, alas, is loft in a noise of words, and heap of notions about it: Neither is it a wonder that men fall into mistakes about it, fince it is only the heart possessed of it that is capable to understand and perceive its true excellency. But if it be afked, What it is? we say, It may be shortly taken up, as the elevation and raising up of a poor mortal unto a conformity with God; as a participation of the divine nature; or as the very image of God stamped on the foul, impressed on the thoughts and affections, and expressed in the life and convertation; so that the man, in whom Christ is formed, and in whom he dwells, lives and walks, hath, while upon earth, a convertation in heaven; not only in opposition to those many, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things, but also to these pretenders unto and personaters of religion, who have confidence in the flesh, and worship God with their own spirit (which in the matters of God is fielh, and not spirit) and have somewhat else to rejoice in, than in Christ Jesus, and a being found in him, not having their own righteoulnels.

True gospel-holiness then consists in some similitude and likeness to God, and fellowship with him founded upon that

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tikeness: There is fuch an impression of God, his glorious attributes, his infinite power, majefty, mercy, justice, will dom, holinets, and grace, Oc. as fets him up all atone in the foul without any competition, and produceth those real apprehensions of him, that he is alone excellent and matchiefs. O how preferable doth he appear, when indeed feen, to all things? and how doth this light of his infinite gloriousness, shining into the soul, darken and obscure to an invisibleness all other excellencies, even as the rising of the fun makes all the leffer lights to disappear? Aias! how is God unknown in his glorious being and attributes? When once the Lord enters the foul, and shines into the heart, it is like the riling of the fun at midnight: All thele things which formerly pretended to fome loveliness, and did dazle with their luftre, are eternally darkned; now all natural perfections and moral virtues, in their flower and perfection, are at best looked upon as aliquid nibil: What things were formerly accounted gain and godliness, are now counted loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jefus the Lord; and the foul can not only fuffer the loss of them all without a fob, but be fatisfied to throw them away as dung, that it may win him, and be found in him. Now the wonder of a Deity, in his greatness, power and grace, swallows up the foul in sweet admiration: O how doth it love to lose itself in finding here what it cannot fathom! And then it begins truly to see the greatness and evil of fin; then it is looked upon without the covering of pleasure or profit, and lothed as the leproly of hell. Now the man is truly like God in the knowledge of good and evil, in the knowledge of that one infinite good, God; and in the knowledge of that one almost infinite evil, fin. This is the first point of likeness to him, to be conformed to him in our understanding, that as he knows himself to be the only self-being and fountain-good, and all created things in their flower and perfection, with all the real or fancied conveniencies, being compared with him, but as the drop of a bucket, the final dust of the balance, or nothing, yea, less then nothing, of nity (which is nothing blown up, by the force or forgery of a vainly working imagination, to the confiftence of an appearance) to for a foul to know indeed, and believe in the heart, that there is nothing deterves the name of good befides God, to have the fame superlative and transcendent thoughts of that great and glor ous felf-being God, and the same diminishing and debating thoughts of all things and beings besides him! and that as the Lord seeth no evil in the creation but fin, and hates that with a perfect flatted, as contrary to his holy will; fo for a foul to aggravate fin

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XX.

in its own fight to an infiniteness of evil, at least till it see it only short of infiniteness in this respect, that it can be swallowed up of infinite mercy. But whence hath the foul all this light? It owes all this, and owns itself as debtor for it, to him who opens the eyes of the blind: it is he who commands the light to hine out of darkness, who hath made these blessed discoveries, and hath given the poor benighted soul the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jejus Christ. These irradiations are from the Spirit's illumination; it is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that hath made day-light in the darkned foul. The man who had the heart of a beaft, as to any faving or folid knowledge of God or himself, hath now got an understanding to know him that is true: now is Christ become the poor man's wisdom, he is now renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. He might well bable of spiritual things, but till now he understood nothing of the beauty and excellency of God and his ways; nay, he knew not what he knew, he was ignorant as a beaft of the life and lustre of those things which he knew in the letter: nothing seemed more despicable to him in the world, than true godliness; but now he judgeth otherwise, because he hath the mind of Christ: the things, which in his darkness he did undervalue as trifles to be mocked at, he now can only mind and admire, fince he became a child of light: now, being delivered from that blindness and brutishness of spirit which possesseth the world (and possessed himself till he was transformed by the renewing of his mind) who esteem basely of spiritual things and set them at nought, he prizeth as alone precious. The world wonders what pleasure or content can be in the service of God, because they see not by tasting how good he is; to be prying into, and poring upon invisible things, is to them visible madness: but to the inlightned mind, the things that are not feen are only worth seeing; and, while they appear not to be, they only are; whereas the things that are seen appear but to be, and are not. Tho' the surpassing sweetness of spiritual things should be spoke of to them, who cannot savour the things of God, in such a manner as the glorious light of them did furround men; yet they can perceive no fuch thing: all is to them cunningly devised fables; let be spoke what will, they see no form, no comeliness, no beauty in this glorious object, God in Christ reconciling sinners to himself. Alas, the mind is blinded, the dungeon is within; and till Christ open the eyes, as well as reveal his light, the foul abides in its blindness, and is buried in midnight darkness: but when the Spirit of God opens the man's eyes, and he is translated

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by an act of omnipotency out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, which is a kingdom of marvelous light; O what matchless beauty doth he now see in these things, which appeared despicable and dark nothings to him, till he got the unction, the eye-salve, which teacheth all things! Now he sees (what none without the Spirit can see) the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, and are freely given them of God; and these, tho' seen at a distance, restect such rays of beauty into his soul, that he beholds and is ravished, he sees and

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But then, in the next place, this is not a spiritless inefficacious speculation about these things, to know no evil but fin and separation from God, and no blessedness but in the fruition of him; it is not such a knowledge of them as doth not principle motion to pursue after them. This, I grant, is part of the image of God, when the Sun of righteousness, by arifing upon the man, hath made day-light in his foul, and by these divine discoveries hath taught him to make the true parallel betwixt things that differ, and to put a just value upon them according to their intrinsick worth: But this divine illumination doth not confitt in a mere notion of fuch things in the head, nor doth it fubfift in inlight ning the mind; but in fuch an impression of God upon the soul, as transforms and changes the heart into his likeness by love. Knowledge is but one line, one draught or lineament of the foul's likeness to him; that alone doth not make up the image, but knowledge rooted in the heart, and engraven on the foul, thining and thewing itself forth in a gospel-adorning conversation, that makes a comely proportion; when the same hand that touched the eye, and turned the man from darkness to light, and gave an heart to know him that he is the Lord, doth also circumcife the man's heart to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his foul, and with all his mind; and this love manifesting its liveleness in its constraining power to live to him and for him. Light without heat is but wild-fire; but light in the mind, begetting heat in the heart, making it burn God-ward, Christ-ward, and Heaven-ward, light in the understanding setting on fire and inflaming the affections, and these shining out in a heavenly conversation, makes up the lively image of God, both in feature and stature, both in proportion and colour. Faith begins this image, and draws the lineaments; and love, bringing forth obedience, finishes, and gives it the lively lustre: The burnings of love in obedience to God is that which illuminates the whole, and makes a man look indeed like him to whole B 3 image kæfi To the Christian Reader.

image he is predeftinate to be conform, and then makes birn, who is ravished with the charms of that beauty, say, as in a manner overcome thereby, How fair is thy love, my firer, my poufe! How much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine aintments than all spices! But consider, that as these beams which irradiate the soul are from the Spirit of Chefft, so that spiritual heat and warmth come out of the same airth, and proceed from the same author; for our fire burns as he blows, our lamp thines as he fouffs and turnisheth oyl. Men therefore would not indulge themseves in this delusion, to think that that which will pais for pure religion and undefiled before God, confifts either in an outward blameless conversation, or in putting on and wearing an external garb of profession: no, as the top of it reachesh higher, so the root of it lies deeper; it is rooted in the heart, this feed being fown in an honest heart (or making the heart honest in which it is sown) takes root downward, and brings fort fruit upward; as trees that grow as far under ground as above, fo these trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that he may be glorified, grow as far and as fast under ground as above: Godliness grows as far downward in self-emptying, self-denial and felf-abating, in hungring and thirsting after more of righteousness, in the secret engagements of the heart to God in Christ, in these burstings of heart and bleedings of foul (to which God alone is witness) because of short-coming in holiness, because of a body of death within, and because of that law in the members warring against the law of the mind, and bringing often into captivity to the law of fin; as it grows upward in a profession: and this is that pure religion and undefiled before God, which is both most pleasant to him, and profitable to the foul.

But to make the difference betwixt dead morality in its best dress, and true godliness, more clear and obvious (that the lovelines of the one may engage men into a lothing of the other, this dead carion and thinking carcase of rotten morality, which still stinks in the nostrils of God, even when embalmed with the most costly ointments of its miserable milled patrons) we say, that true godliness, which in quality and kind differs from this much pleaded for, and applauded morality, (a black heathen by a mongrel kind of christians baptized of late with the name of Christianity, and brought into the temple of the Lord, concerning which he hath commanded that it should never, in that shape, and for that end it is introduced, enter into his congregation; and the bringers for their pains are like to feelude themselves for ever from his presence) it respects Jesus Christ, 1. As

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Firft, I fay, true holiness, in its being and operation. respects Jesus Christ as its principle; I live staid that shining saint) yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. As that which gives teligion its first being, is the religation of the soul to God; so that which gives it motion, and draws forth that life into action, is the same God's working all their works in them and for them, so that, in all they do, they are workers together with God; every act of holiness is an act of the foul made alive unto God thro' Jesus Christ, and quickned to each action by the supervenience of new life and influence: therefore, fays Christ, Without me you can do nothing. It is not, Being out of me you can do nothing (for he spoke it to those who were in him) but, If ye leave me out in doing, all ye do will be nothing. It is Jefus Christ who gives life and legs, fo that our runnings are according to his drawings: My foul followeth bard after thee (faid that holy man) but, whence is all this life and vigour? Thy right hand upholdeth me. O, it is the upholdings and helpings of this right-hand, enlarging the man's heart, that makes a running in the way of his commandments; it is he who, while the faints work out the work of their own falvation, worketh in them both to will and to do; It is he who giveth power to the faint, and who, to them that have no might, increaseth strength; so that the poor, lifeless, languishing ly-by is made to mount up with eagles wings, and furmout all these difficulties with a holy facility, which were simply insuperable, and pure impossibilities: now the man runs and doth not weary, because Christ drawe; and he walks and doth not faint, because Christ, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, dwells in him, and walks in him, and dwells in him for that very end, that he may have a compleatness and competency of strength for duty: all grace is made to abound unto him, that he always having all fufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work: he is able of himself to do nothing, no not to think any thing as he ought; but he hath a sufficiency of God, whereby he is thorowly furnished unto every good work; so that he may say, I am able for all things: it is more than I am able to do all things, as we read it; its just import is, I am able to do all things, and to endure all things; and that which keeps it from vain boafting is what is added, through Christ which strengthneth me, or putting power in me, or rather impowering me, which is by a supervenient act drawing forth life into a liveliness of exercise according to the present exigent. There is power in a faint,

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bec: use Christ is in him, that overpowers all the powers of darkness without, and all the power of indwelling corruption within; so when the poor weak creature is ready to despond within light of his duty, and fay, because of difficulty, What is my frength that I fould hope? Christ saith, De-Spond not, my grace is sufficient for thee, and my power fall rest upon thee, to a reviving thee, and raising thee up, and putting thee in case to say, When I am weak, then I am trong; his strength, who impowers me, is made perfect in my weakness, so that I will glory in my infirmities, and be glad in being grace's debror. But, what power is that which raiseth the dead sinner, and carries the soul in its actings so far without the line, and above the sphere of all natural activity, when stretched to its utmost? Oit is an exceeding great power which is to themward who believe, that must make all things, how difficult soever, easy, when he works in them to will and to do, according to the working of his mighty power (or as it is upon the margin, and more emphatick, of the might of his power) which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and Jet bim at his own right hand, &c. He that raised up the Lord Jefus from the dead, raiseth up believers also by Jesus, and being raised and revived by him, to walk in newness of life, the life of Jesus, in its communications of strength, is manifest in their mortal flesh, according to that of the same apostle, The life that I live in the flesh (saith he) I live by the faith of the Sen of God. Faith brings in Christ in my foul; and Christ, being my life, carries out my foul in all the acts of obedience, wherein, tho' I be the formal agent, yet the efficiency and the power, by which I operate, is from him; so that I can give no better account of it than this, I not I. But who then, if not you? The grace of God, Saith he, which was with me. But this mystery (to our bold, because blind, moralists) of an indwelling Christ, working mightily in the foul, is plain madness and melancholy. However, we understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, who said, The life I live in the flesh, &c. and from what we understand of his knowledge in that mystery, which he had by revelation, we understand our moralists to be men of corrupt minds, who concerning the faith have made shipwreck. But what is that, The life I live in the flesh? &c. The import of it seems to be this, if not more, While I have in me a foul animating my body, as the principle of all my vital and natural actions, I have Jesus Christ animating my foul; and, by the impulse and communicate vertue and strength of an indwelling Christ, I am made to run the

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Secondly, This gospel-holiness respects Jesus Christ as its pattern. It proposeth no lower pattern for imitation than to be conform to his image: he that is begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, girds up the loins of his mind (which are the affections of his foul, left by falling flat upon the earth he be hindred in running the race fet before him, as looking to the forerunner his pattern) in this girdle of hope, that he may be holy in all manner of conversation; keeping his eye upon the precept and pattern, that his practice may be conform. It is written, faith he, Be ye boly, for I am boly. The hope of seeing God and being ever with him, imposeth a necessity upon him who hath it, to look no lower than at him who is glorious in holiness; and therefore he is said to purify himself, even as be is pure. And knowing that this is the end of their being quickned together with Christ, that they may walk even as he walked; they, in their working and walking, aim at no less than to be like him; and therefore never fit down upon any attained measure, as if they were already perfect. The spotless purity of God, expressed in his laws, is that whereto they study assimilation; therefore they are still in motion towards this mark, and are changed from one glorious grace into another, into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, who never gives over his putting them to cleanse from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, till that be true in the truest sense, Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. And, knowing that perfect fruition of him cannot be without perfect conformity to him, herein do they exercise themselves, to grow in grace, and to be still advancing towards some more likeness to his image, forgetting all their attainments as things that are behind, and, by their reachings forth unto that which is before, make it evident that they make every begun degree of grace and conformity to God, a prevenient capacity for a new degree, which yet they have not attained. I know, our moralists look upon themselves as matchless, in talking of following his steps, as he hath left us an example; in this they make a flourish with flanting effrontry: But, for all their boatting of wisdom, such a poor simple man as I, am made to wonder at their folly, who proposing, as they say, the purity of Christ for their pattern, are not even thence convinced, that, in order to a conformity thereto, there is a fimple and absolute necessity of the mighty operations of that Spirit of God, whereby this end can be reached. But while they flout at the Spirit's working, as a melancholy tancy,

fancy, whereby the foul is garnished with the beauty of holiness, and made an habitation for God, I doubt not to fay of these great sayers, that they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm: nay, doth not their talking of the one, not only without feeing the necessity of the other, but speaking against it, say in the heart of every one (who hath not the heart of a beaft) that they have never yet got a fight of the holine's of that pattern, nor of their own pollutions and impotency? for, if they had, they would give themselves up to Jesus Christ to be washed by him, without which they can have no part with him. O there will be a valt difference, at the latter day, betwixt them who have given their black fouls to Jesus Christ to bleech, when he shall present them without spot, not only clothed with wrought gold, but all glorious within; and these who have never dipped, yea, who have despised to dip their defiled fouls in any other fountain, fave in the impure puddle of their own performances: this will make them lothfom in his fight, and cause his foul abhor those, who have done this despite unto the Spirit of grace, as to flight that bessed fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Let them pretend as high as they will to look to him as a pattern, while (because the plague-fore is gone up in their eye) they look not to him as a price, nor to the grace of Jefus Christ as that which can only principle any acceptable performance of duty, he will plunge them in the ditch, and it will cost them their fouls, for rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, in not making use of him who came by water as well as by blood.

Thirdly, This goipel-holiness respects Christ as the altar. It is in him, and for him, that his foul is well pleased with our performance; this is the alrar upon which thou must lay thy gift, and leave it, without which thy labour is loft, and whatfoever thou doft is lothed as a corrupt thing. believers draw all their strength from him, so they expect acceptation only thro' him, and for him: they do not look for it, but in the beloved; they dare not draw near to God in duty, but by him: this is the new and living way which is confecrate for them; and if such, who offer to come to God, do not enter in hereat, instead of being admitted to a familiar converse with God, they shall find him a consuming fire. When the faints have greatest liberty in prayer (and so of all other performances, when their hearts are most lifted up in the ways of the Lord) they abhor at thinking their prayer can any otherwise be set forth before him as incense, or the lifting up their hands as the evening-facrifice, but as presented by the great Intercessor,

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and perfumed by the merit of his oblation. If they could weep out the marrow of their bones, and the moiflure of their body in mouraing over fin; yet they durft not think of having what comes from so impure a spring, and runs thorow fo polluted a chanel, presented to God, but by Jesus Christ, in order to acceptation: for as they look to the exalted Saviour to get their repentance from him, to when, by the pouring out upon them the Spirit of grace and fupplication, he hath made them pour out their hearts before him, and hath melted them into true tendernels, fo that their mourning is a great mourning, they carry back these tears to be washed and bathed in his blood, as knowing without this of how little worth and value with God their falt water, is; but, when they are thus walhed, he puts them in his bottle, and then pours them out again to them in the wine of ftrong confolation: thus are they made glad in his house of prayer, and their fighs and grones come up with acceptance upon his altar. O bleffed altar, that fan-chifes the gold! this is that altar, whereto the mocking moralift hath no right. It is by him that the poor believer offers up his facrifice to God continually; whatever he doth, in word or deed, he defires to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus: as he knows, he lives to make intercession, and to appear in the presence of God for his poor people. both to procure influences for duty, and plead for acceptation; so he depends upon him for both, as knowing he can never otherwise hear, nor have it said unto him, Well done, good and faithful fervant. It may be he can do little, he hath but a mite to offer; but he puts it in the Mediator's hand to be presented to God: he hath not gold, nor filver. nor purple to bring, he can do no great things; he hath but goats hair or rams skins, but he gives them the right tincture, he makes them red in the blood of Christ, and so they are a beautiful incarnate.

Laftly, This Gospel-holiness respects Jesus Christ as its last end. As it hath its being from him, so it is all directed toward the praise of his grace. While the believing soul, in whom Christ dwells, designs no less, and aims at no lower mark, than assimilation to God, and fruition of him; while he is endeavouring always, and in all things, to be unlike himself and what he was, that he may be like God; it is not to be like him on that wicked and wretched design which man had at first in hiseye, whereby he lost his God, and unmade a man; but it is that thereby he may be in better case to glorify him, and that God may be the more endeared to his own soul, because of what he hath done for him, and commended and made precious to the souls of o-

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thers, while they take notice of what a change grace hath not only made in his most eminent appearances for God; he contracts himself into a disappearance, that God may appear and be seen in the shining glory of his grace bestowed upon him. For the godly man of all men is the most humble, this is the garb he clothes himself with: if his face shine in his accesses to God, that pride may be hid from his eyes, he wots not of it; the very thoughts of robbing God of his glory, and clothing himself with the spoils of his honour, are terrible to him, and looked upon as that wherein the foul resembles Satan most manifestly: and therefore that great practitioner, who outstript all others in doing and fuffering for God, dare not stand up to intercept the glory due to his mafter, but ascribes all to him, with a nevertheless, Nevertheless not I, but the grace of God which was with me. What haft thou which thou haft not received, prevents his boafting, and imposeth the necessity of bleffing the donor: the mark he aims at, in his exercifing himself to godliness, is mainly this, that men feeing his good works, may plorify his Father which is in heaven. As he knows he acts not in his own strength, but in his who counts him worthy of the high calling, and fulfils all the good pleasure of his goodness in him, and the work of faith with power; so he confiders for what all this is, it is that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ; and he hath a sweet complacency in complying with this God-exalting and grace-magnifying defign: when grace hath fet a crown upon his head, and made him a king (for the meanest believer is truly a more illustrious prince than than the greatest potentate of the earth, not only because under his rags lies hid a title to a crown, and his expectation is to fit with Christ upon his throne; but because he is already crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies, and doth, while on the earth, fit together with Christ in heavenly places; Christ is possessed of glory in his stead, as his representative and head, and a man is all crowned and acknowledged as king, when his head is crowned) he knows he is made a prieft also, to facrifice it to the giver; and therefore he casts down his crown before the throne with this, Thou art worthy to receive glory and bonour, &c. and he esteems the privilege of doing so, as great as the prerogative of having it fet on: when he works hardest to adorn himself with the beauty of holiness, it is not so much that his beauty may appear perfect, as that that grace, to which he is a debtor for all his comeliness, may thine in its lufture; and his vertues, who hath called him to glory and virtue,

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may be shewed forth; he designs not, in his diligence in duty, to be taken notice of as a fingular faint; but his great and thining fingularity, which he doth most abominate, lies in this, that Christ in the communications of his grace. and efficacy of his influence, may be admired in him, as in all that believe. In a word, as all that he hath is of him and from him, so all he does or designs is for him and to him; it is Christ to him to live, in whom Christ lives. Now, this is the very nature of pure religion and undefiled, and that which compleats the image of God, and puts it beyond all debate, that his foul hath received the stamp and impresfion of the royal feal on it, and his heart is the epiftle of Christ, written, not with ink and pen, but with the Spirit of the living God, when his glory, and the exaltation of the manifold grace and manifold wisdom of God, in the contrivance of falvation, is upmost in his thinkings, desirings, projectings and endeavourings, and hath the first place in the roll of his wishings: while other men seek their own things, it is his own, his only own, his one, his all, to feek the things of Christ, that blessed seeker, who came to seek him, and fave him; and, being found of him, he endeavours to carry as one no more his own: the glorifying of him in his body and spirit, which are his, because bought by him, is his begun heaven; and the greatest errand he hath in heaven, is to get a more clear fight of that bleffed object of all admiration and adoration, and to be in better case to cry him up for ever.

Now, this is but a fhort and general character, drawn by an unskilful hand, of that holiness which will abide the test, and be found true, when tried by the touch-stone of the

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But let us, on the other hand, take a short view of what our moralists substitute in its place, as (in their account) both more beautiful in the eye, and more beneficial to the fouls of men; wherein I intend to be brief. I might compend the account to be given shortly, and give it most exactly, yet truly in these sew words: As the most undoubted deviation from, and perfect opposition unto, the whole contrivance of Salvation, and the conveyance of it unto the Souls of men, as revealed in this gospel which brings life and immortality to light, that fighters against the grace of God in its value and vertue can forge, stretching their blind reason to the overthrow of true religion, and ruin of the souls of men. For to this height these masters of reason have in their blind rage risen up against the Lord and against his Anointed; this is the dreadful period of that path, wherein we are perswaded to walk, yea hectored, if we would

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not forfeit the repute of men by these grand Sophies, who afforste to themselves the name and thing of knowledge, as if wildom were to die with them. The deep myfterles of falvation, which angels delife to look into, and only fatisfy themselves with admiration at, must appear as respondents at their bar; and, if they decline the judge and court as incompetent, they flee out and flour at subjecting this blind mole, man's reason, to the revelation of faith in a mystery. The manifold wisdom of God, and the manifold grace of God, must either condescend to their unfoldings, and be content to speak in their dialect; or else there wits, there Athenian dictators will give the deep things of God, because beyond their divings, the fame entertainment, which that great gospel-preacher, Paul, met with from men of the same mould, kidney, and complexion, because he preached unto them Jesus. What abould the babler fay? faid they, The Spirit of wildom and revelation they know not, they have not, they acknowledge not, nay, they despite him in his faving and soul-ascertaining illuminations; and the workings of that mighty power to themward who believe, is to the men of this new mould (because they have not found it) an infusierable fancy, to be exploded with a disdain and indignation; which discovers what spirit acts them in this opposition.

But what do they fay, that will found this charge, and free us from calting iniquity upon them? They are of age, and can speak for themselves: when they have vomit out their gall against the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the new birth, and that holiness which is imparted to the real members of Christ, with a scotling petulancy; they then make a great noise of holiness, as, who but they. The thing they plead for, and perswade unto, is a kind of holiness educed out of natural abilities, wherein Christ, the Spirit and the Gospel of the grace of God, are permitted no greater interest, nor allowed a more effectual adjuvancy, than to concur by way of precept, motive and example? This is now that admired and applauded Diana Morality. It is true, they will sometime chirt thorow their teeth (for whatever Christ, the Spirit and the Gospel gets of our moralifis, it is against the hair, and they are hard put to it ere they give it) a tepid acknowledgment, that the gospel doth afford men some special help, and is of singular use and advantage, in the wing the way and rule with greater clearnels, and guiding and directing how to walk in it with a plain perspicuity, and exciting by noble examples; and fome do also add some faint and frigid motions of the holy Choft, in the dispensations of this truth, put forth to make men To the Christian Reader.

men more foreward, but all this falso jure of the great Diana: fo much and no more is yielded to the golpel, than to thew men with clearness, how they may exert and pue forth their proper and innate power; it affords them some special help in holding the candle, or rather snuffing it, that to they may with more promptitude see how to operate, and by the motives it adduceth, and examples it brings, have a special provocation to the exercise of these virtues commanded: the gospel, with all it brings and doth, does no more but hold the candle, till these artists weave their web, shape and few their garment, and then let them fee how to put it onand, being put on, perswade them to wear it, as the highest beauty and chief ornament of the foul. This is all the provision they lay up for eternity, and, in this dress and garb of gilded morality, they mind to address themselves to God. and appear before his tribunal with confidence of acceptacion: they will bear their own charges to heaven, and carry a fum with them to purchase the possession of the saints in light, with a little abatement, which a mercy of their own moulding (for God's mercy it is not) must make; and thus they make all fure.

But, what is all this noise that these vain talkers make about holiness? they heap up words (which weep to be so abused) about virtue, love to God, mortification, &c. but they have really taken away our Lord Jelus Christ, and will not tell us where they have laid him, for fear we should go feek him, and forfake them. What are these rotten and lothsom rags, wherewith they would clothe us, that the shame of our nakedness may not appear, to that holiness whereto we are predeftinate before the foundation of the world, and whereto (in order to the obtaining of that falvation, even the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which we are chosen) we are created again in Christ Josus, and made meet to be possessed of by sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth? What is all this rattle of theirs to the new birth, the faving work of regeneration (without which a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God) the new creature, the new heart, having the law written in it. the Spirit which he puts within us, causing us to walk in his ways; that noble principle of spiritual life, whereby we are quickned, raifed from the dead, made alive unto God thro Christ Jesus, disposed, inclined, and enabled to live to God, and walk before him to all pleasing? Nay, according to the impolings of these new dogmatists (Beware of dogs, says the apostic, of the same size and sort of men) instead of that principle implanted, and that power produced in us by the chectual operation of the Holy Ghoft, working in us migh-

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tily, according to the workings of that mighty power which was wrought in Christ when raised from the dead; we must be content with somewhat which was living, tho lazy and dormant, in the natural powers of our own foul, now awakned out of its fopor, and educed into act by the mere application of external means. In a word, instead of all that which is purchased and procured unto us by the death of Jefus Christ, wrought in us by his Spirit (who rakes of his, and shews it unto us) whereby our conformity to Jesus Christ is begun and carried on, we must content with this morality (good Lord, prevent fuch madness!) whose principle is natural reason; whose rule is the law of nature, as explained in the scriptures; whose use and end is acceptation with God, and justification before him; which is pure (impure) Pelagianism, propagate now in Britain, where it had its unhallowed birth; a tremenduous fignification of the high displeasure of God against these husting arrogants of this age, who, because they have not received the truth in love, are left to foul-murdering delufions, and, for their despising the unsearchable riches of Christ held forth in the gospel, are left (instead of embracing Christ Jesus into their foul as altogether lovely, whom God hath made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption) to embrace in their bosom, and hug between their breafts, this hell-born, and (after all the cost they have beflowed upon it, wherein they are at the expence of their precious foul, if repentance [prevent it not) hell-black brat morality, in opposition to that gospel-holiness, wherein conformity to God confifts.

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It concerns thee, Christian Reader, whosoever thou art, carefully to observe, that the great design the devil this day drives at in the world, is how to introduce a religion amongst these called Christians, which for the soul and substance of it is an antichristian masse and meddly, substitute and obtruded in place of the marrow of the gospel, and mysteries of salvation: And tho' Christ be named amongst these perverters of the gospel, yet he is really exauctorate and robbed of his offices; and, while false ends are assigned, the great end of his coming in the world is denied, and the bleffed intendment and defign of the gospel of the grace of God is defeat. Now, because Satan finds no mids so proper for his purpose, nor mean so certain to accomplish his end, as to corrupt the minds of men with perverse principles (for they are more than half-way to hell, when their principles flate them in an opposition to the Prince of life) he perverts them into a nauseating of the plain path-way of salvation by a flain Saviour, (for the preaching of the crofs, whatTo the Christian Reader.

ever they precend, is really to them foolishness) and feduceth them to a latisfaction with and pleading for this pagast piety, as preferable to pure religion and undefiled before God: and then under the mask of morality, and disguise of virtue, doth Abaddon muster all his several legions, and manage his opposition against the Mediator, in the coming of his kingdom in the world, and conquering the fouls of men. It is true, there may be some small difference betwine his forces when gathered in the field, in their manner, or method and mark; some attacking the gospel in the very substance of it, with a flouting and fierce influency, others with a fubtile and fneaking fullenness; but all of them concentre in the defign, and bewray such a keenness and diligence in driving it, as shows both under whose banner they fight, and how true they are to their colours and captain. Herein Papifts, Pelagians, Socinians, Arminians, and (the compound of all abominations) Quakers are unite. And truly, if I might be heard, I would befeech also our peppercorn men to confider how far the adversary of man's salvation hath improved their affertions and concellions, and how much advantage the common enemies of the truth have got thereby.

Take notice therefore, I fay, Christians, of this (being) Satan's main defign) and how and by whom it is managed, eft ye be seduced into the same conspiracy; for many, who cemed to be of understanding, have fallen, because they hid not fear to fall. O beware, left ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastes; but study to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour (for there is none other name given inder heaven, whereby men may be faved) JESUS HRIST. 1 know, that every reader and ferious Chris tian, in order to his own establishment, is not able to purhafe, nor is at leifure to perufe, what godly men have write en for this end, and whose praise, because of their pains, in the church of Christ; such as that large discourse of carned and truly religious Doctor Owen, upon the Holy pirit; wherein that worthy author, as he hath given a toof to the world of Christ's being formed in him, and that is working, and walking, and witnesling to the truth, proceds from the same noble principle, Christ dwelling in him. nd walking in him; to he hath with a profound peripicuity. nd convincing plainness, discovered the nature, pedigree, elcent and tendency of this monster; and then, having covered whence it came, and for what end, he hath given a morral blow, whereby he hath laid it all alongs, and 3 It it sprawling and gnawing its tongue and gnalling its

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as all the lovers of that truth, which is according to godliness, are obliged to bless the Lord; so are they under the obligation of thankfulness to him: and by this I return him my poor insignificant thanks, and I have the allowance of the

author to do the same in his name.

But I would recommend to you, who can neither purchase nor peruse what is more voluminous (how worthy soever) the ferious perufal, as of the whole of that favoury and grace-breathing piece, The Fulfilling of the Scriptures; so there in that short but sweet digression, against blackmouthed Parker, wherein the gracious author takes out his own foul, and fets before thine eye the image of God imprefied thereon: for while he deals with that Defperado by clear and convincing reason, flowing natively from the pure fountain of divine revelation, he hath the advantage of most men, and writers too, in filencing that blasphemer of the good ways of God, with arguments taken from what he hath found acted upon his own foul. And likewife I would recommend, as a fovereign antidote against this poison, the diligent perufing and pondering of what is shortly hinted against the hellish belchings of the same unhallowed author (in the preface to that piece of great Mr. Durbam, upon the Commands) by a disciple, who, besides his natural acuteness and subactness of judgment in the depth of gospel-mysteries, is known by all who know him (and, for myfelf, I know none now alive his equal) to have most frequent access to loan his head on his Mafter's bosom, and so in best case to tell his fellow-disciples and brethren what is breathed into his own foul, while he lives in these embraces, and under the sheddings-abroad of that love of God in his soul, which drew and did dictate these lines against that flouter at all such fruitions. Nor can I here omit to observe, how when the devil raised up Parker, that monster, to bark and blaspheme, the Lord raised up a Merveil to fight him at his own weapon, who did to eudget and quell that boatting brave, as I know not if he be dead of his wound, but, for any thing I know, he hath laid his speech.

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But to close this short account of that new gospel, that other gospel introduced and obtruded upon us with a soming flourish of words, and to lay it before thee in its pure and perfect opposition to the gospel of the grace of God, take a short compend of it, in the words of one of its great partners, they are set down in that new piece, called Clausserm Asime, p. 114, where the author having cited some scriptures, which do indeed press and perswade to the practice of pure religion and undefiled, less his morality should suffer

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of, and be found reprobate metal, if tried by fuch a touchstone, he guards his reader from falling into such a mistake (a dangerous one it is indeed to his delign, for, if thou fall in it, thy foul is escaped out of this cloister, he loses his prey, and he will not be able to carry thee hood-winked to the pit) as if he meant or were preffing that holinels, which for its foundation hath peace with God thro' Jefus Chrift, and for its working principle bath the life of God, whereby the dead is quickned; and for its progress the renewed influences of the Spirit: No, by no means, he clears himself that he is of a far other mind, and therefore, to make his reader of his mind too, he adds ---- Here is nothing to countainence these frightful fanatical panes of the new hirth, which proceed from enthusiasm or melancholy a nothing to countenance the fanciful applications of a borrowed or rather fnatcht-away righteourness. Why not ? The change (fays he) that our religion requires, the scripture supposeth it in all that have embraced Christanity, p. 113. And again, to the fame putpole, p. 114 in opposition to the new creature, which he mocks and murders, the real obange in our affections is suppoled and recommended (Pelagius redivious) which is this upon the matter, It is frightful, fanatical melancholy, mad fancy, to talk and tell people of being born again, of quickning the dead, no, the fool is alive, it is not dead, it is but at work a little drowly or affect, there needs no more but knock at the door, and the man will rife and run in the way of commanded duties, and acquire more liveliness and agility by a frequent and reiterate eduction of his innace power into set; let objective grace be but given tand to these great wits every stone and brute is a bible, on which they can read what will regulate them in their walk; to that there is no simple necessity of the feriptures to them, for making them wife to falvation: thefe concur only ad bene effe, and are given ex superabiendante) there is subjective grace enough: one needs not go without the powers of his own foul, to feek a fufficiency; he can will, and he can do, without a dependence upon any real life-giving power, or supervenient influence, working in him to will and do; And then, in opposition to that funciful, borrowed and inatched-away right coolsels to him an old and newdeviced doctrine) De and live is inbititure at the choic of the paragraph; and that to him is the only way how the offered salvation is obtained. Now, Reader, if thou he not an utter dranger to the

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work of God upon the fouls of his people, the poison drop-

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and plain a perversion of the gospel, as will vindicate and acquit any thing which hath been said of these perverters of the right ways of the Lord, and layers of another foundation besides Jesus Christ, from the imputation of severity. Christ had told us, that the way to heaven is strait and narrow, and sew find it; but out comes one out of the closter (I suspect hell is broke loose against us) and having laid aside Christ, who is the door and the way, and the light and the life, shows us an easy, plain and pleasant way to heaven.

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Well, before thou follow such a guide, I defire thee to take notice how well the all of what is contained in this curied claufrum doth agree unto, and is a just commentary upon, what is prefixed in his frontispiece, wherein he hath Christ drawn upon the cross, but, not satisfied to crucify him in effigie, he through the whole of his discourse doth really crucity him again, and put him to an open shame. The sense and soul of every line, as it lies in his book, and is levelled to his defign, is, Away with him, away with him; he calls himself The Lord our righteoulness, take away that name from him, we own him not, we acknowledge him not as our righteoufness, we will not beg nor borrow a robe from him, our own mantle of morality must be to us initead of this Mediator: and for the two thieves that must be crucified with him, the one is the new birth, the other is the all of that gospel-obedience performed by vertue of supervenient influences communicate from that fole spring of spiritual life, Christ dwelling in the soul of the regenerate person : two (in their account) as great thieves asever run, for they have stole away mistrel's morality her plumale, and stript her of her ornaments, so that it is impossible to hide the fhame of her nakedness but in their death, and for this must they be taken and grucified with their Mafter, that movality, having what these took from her restored, may bewitch the world with her beauty, and ravish them with her charms. And for his title to his book, The love of Yelus, I judge, confidering how he explains it in his book, and how true he is to his undertaking, this question is a fuitable return to it, Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kifs? O he is killing kind! it is not enough that he act Pilate's part, unless he act Judas his part also. But why did he not speak more modestly of the new birth, lest men should remember that it was Jesus his own doctrine? Why? (the man goes not mad without reason) first, Because, in prejudice to morality and its merit, he had delivered this doctrine with such a severe certification, that there is no seeing the kingdom of God without it. But, 2. Left and thing of the folemnity that attended the crucifying of Chrit

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Christ should be wanting, after he hath nailed him upon the cross, and thrust a spear in his side, falls a mocking to increase the pangs, for having taught so frightful, fanatical enthuliastick and melancholy a doctrine as the necessity of being in pangs of the new birth, if ever men would be in heaven.

However, I perceive some are now upon a reformation (good news if true, for the world will bear them witness of its necessity.) But is this it? is this the mode of the religion to be introduced with such a pomp and parade? is this the reformation, that the reformed church must be taken away and thrown down, to make way for the crection of this new monastery? Well, when it is built (which only, mercy can prevent) to give it its due, you see, less cannot be written over the porch of his edifice, if according to the pattern, than this; The unclean spirit that was cast out, is returned, and bath taken possession with seven devils worse

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Now, while Satan drags most men with their own confent thorow the puddle of gross prophanity, and these swine, fwallowed up in fenfuality, run as he drives (being led captive of him at his pleasure) without all dread of being drowned in the lake, where he will land them; and while he befots the foaring wits of the age into a flighting and fetting at nought the glorious Saviour, with that invaluable and precious falvation which he brings to poor felf-destroyed finners, fome few there are, whom he will not want, and whom he will not fuffer to wander from the refuge and refting-place of fouls, and whom he will not fuffer to reft fatisfied while they want him; these he delivers from the impolings of Satan, and the betrayings of their own deceitful and desperately wicked heart, by opening their eyes, so that they are made to approve the things which are more excellent, being taught of God, and are prevailed with, thro' the efficacious perswasions of that grace which will take no refutal from some, to subject their consent unto the gospel. But, alas! even many of these, into whose soul the ight hath shined, and who have a living principle implanted in them, which will spring up into everlasting life; (and therefore cannot mils of the end of their faith, the salvation of their fouls) yet how busy is Satan, and how doth he hang upon their working hand, so that the good which they would, that they do not? And in this he hath the concurtence of that law which is in their members, carrying them impetuously to do what they would not, and captivaing them unto that law of fin which is in their members. How often, alas! are they engaged by the fly suggestions of

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Satan, and specious folicitations of their own hearts, into things unworthy of their high and holy calling ! fo that however grace, which prevented them at first, will also rescue them at last; yet by their untender way and walk, as they rob God of the glory of his grace, in not thewing forth his yertues in all things, they also deprive themselves of the comfort thereof thro' their uncircumfpeet walking, and of that fweet inward ferenity of mind, and unipeakable joy, which is to be had in fellowship with him and in the end must suffer lose, by having their works burnt, and they themselves but almost, wear scareely saved; saved they must be (because on the foundation) yet so as by fire: while the tender Christian, who exerciseth himself to godlines, Bath a fweet life, his heaven is ferene and clear, his fludy to purge his heart from corruption, and cleanle his hands in innocency, keeps his interest unclouded, his care not to grieve the Spirit in his workings, delivers him from the grief flowing from the Spirit's ceafing to witness: he so thinks on whatfoever things are true, whatfoever things are honeft, abbatfoever things are just, whatfoever things are pure, whatfoever things are lovely, whatfoever things are of good report, as to do them; knowing that this is the way to have that beace of God, which paffeth all understanding, to guard bis beart and mind through Christ Jesus. He who hath a convertation in heaven, cannot want a confort of fweet mufick in his own foul. O what melody must it make in the foul, how fweet must the chirpings and chimings of such a bird be finging in the bosom, as the restimony of a man's conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God (O mark how the crown of his gloriation and gladness is put upon grace's head!) he bath his conversation in the world! And then, when he hath served his generation thus according to the will of God, having made it his work, as one made partaker of the divine nature, to add one grace to another, he enters his harboar (O glorious landing, where God is feen, and glory dwells!) with a room sea, and a porting wind: for says the Holy Ghoft, An entrance hall be ministred unto you abundant. ly into the everlafting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Chrift. Whereas the man whose work it bath not been so to walk as he might adorn the doctrine of God the Saviour in all things, and bold forth in his way the word of life, dies often in the dark, because he did not walk as becomes a child of light: and though that God, whose gifts and calling are without repentance, may fave him; yet his glory may require it, to withhold from him the testimony of the Spirit, which is by water, and never, while he is in this world,

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either let himfelf or others wit of it, nay, not only to, but he may go off the stage with horror, and go out of this life under the terrors of God: for tho' the Spirit of God, being the Spirit of truth, will never after the word that its gone out of his mouth, and once having faid, Thou are a fonand in a gracious flate, will never again fay. Thou art no fon, and thy grace is no grace, but yet, when his conficience awakes upon him, and aggravates his guilt from what he had formerly been helped to do, and ftings him till he rore by reason of the disquietness of his beart, and all his evidences for heaven are to blurred, (the' not delete) as there is not one legible letter in them, he cannot fay, when he is just laying speech, that he hath one token for good; and, in this mift, the fincerity and reality of the whole may not only be questioned, but denied: The Spirit, I say, tho' once having wrought the good work, and translated the foul out of a ftate of bondage into a ftate of glorious liberty, will never again deny his own work; yet may he stand by filent, and fay nothing, and fee the poor man, whom he will fave for all this (as a just punishment for his untenderness, and that all who hear or look on may learn to walk more cire cumspectly, and take heed of grieving the Spirit, whereby they are fealed) expire under these pangs, throws, tollings, terrors, affrightments, and foul-diffracting fears, wherewith he was filled and overwhelmed, under the first workings of the Spirit of bondage.

But, belides these, a little lovely flock there is, a few number, who thro' grace obtain mercy to walk, as bating the garment spotted with the flest; they make religion their business; it is their one thing, to abstain from all appearance of evil, and to exercise themselves to godliness: by the circumspection of their walking, it is evident, they are upon their watch, and make it their work, not only to keep their heart with all keeping, but so to keep themselves in their converfings in the world, amidst a crowd of snares, and throng of tentations, as that evil one touch them not s they carry as knowing that Satan, who goeth about feeking whom he may devour, way-lays them, and watches to catch all advantages against them ; and therefore, as not ignorant of his devices, they study sobriety and vigilancy, lest thro' a secure incircumspection they be circumvented, and give him the advantage he seeks, and so bear the mark of his black hand. Yea, some of these, at some rare times, do not only fatisfy themselves to carry as defendants, but are helped to fuch a heroick, heavenly and Christ-like relittance, as to make Satan flee from them; and when they, thro' him who frengthneth them unto the barrier (and

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will at last once for all, and for ever, tread Satan under their feet, and make the weakest wriglings, that ever gave up their names to the Captain of Salvation, fet their feeble feet as more than conquerors upon the neck of the great red dragon, and off his neck, to his everlasting confusion, mount up in their triumphing chariot, and receive the conquerors crown) have acquir themselves as the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, not only in warding off the blows of that Soulsenemy, but in managing the Iword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith, so in the conflict, as they make the enemy, who stretched out the hand to strike at them, take in a flump, they then purfue their victory, on purpole to fet the crown on the Captain's head, thro' whole strength alone they gained it. But, alas! even amongst these select number, these more serious souls and fingle servants of God, how few do improve, as they ought and might, that ftrength and help which is their allowance, and whereby they might be made strong for the labour of religion? How many of these few followers after holiness do move slowly, and promove little? They cannot give over the fludy of holiness, (their heart being engaged to God and his ways, beyond a retreat) but how heartless and handless are they at their work? They tug at duty, and tire themselves in the ways of God, without any feen fuccess, or experiencing the sweet of his service, their profiting doth not appear to all, which, as it is their fin, is also attended with shame and forrow: yea, they carry so despondently in duty, as if the gospel required brick without furnishing straw; whereas, if they took the right way, they might walk without wearying; even the faint, and they who have no might, if they knew and had learned how to lay their help upon him who is mighty, where God hath laid it, should find their strength increased, to a furmounting of all difficulties, and an experiencing of a fweet facility in the ways of God; so that instead of whineing and fobbing over their duty, of which they are often found as an enemy, and finking under a hand-weakning despondency, they might fing in the sweet, pleasant and plain ways of holiness; they might make his statutes their songs in the house of their pilgrimage, and be able from their own experience to fag it, and feal it, that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

Now, that the less tender, in whom the root of the matter is, may be persuaded and provoked to a shining serious-ness, to the adorning of that doctrine of God the Savious which they profess, and they whose souls are not only biased towards the ways of God, but have some holy habitual bentnessheaven-wards, and it is their burden that the whole

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of their course doth not evidence a conversation in heaven: To the end, I say, that both may not only be prevailed with to fludy more conformity to the Head, whose members they are, and have a convertation fuch as becometh the golpet indeed; but may thro' grace acquire a bleffed facility in going from frength to frength, and growing frong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; this enfuing treatife is put in thy hand, that thy beart may be lifted up in the ways of the Lord: Wherein the author hath, with a peculiar perspicuity and special plainness, not only set before thine eve that bleffed Sun of righteouinels, as thining in this golpel with a meridian brightness, to the irradiating, with the rays of his glorious light, the darkned foul; and likewife thou haft him not only here held forth as that alone living fountain and overflowing spring of all spiritual life and strength; but he hath taught thee and me how to make use of him, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, in all the several steps of darkness or difficulty which may emerge and occur, to the fore-flowing us in our course of Christianity. fo as we may find a compleatness and competency of strength communicate unto us. That bleffed high way, called the way of boliness, is made so plain herein, that the wayfaring man cannot err in it; because it shews how to give the hand to God, as a guide to Jefus Christ that bleffed leader. who brings the blind by a way that they know not, and leads them in paths that they have not known, who makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. And the apparently rough and rigid ways of godliness are discovered to be so easy and sweet, that the lame may leap as an hart. because of life-giving influence, and the tongue of the dumb or disconsolate Christian may fing, under these gracious supportings, and fay, His quays are indeed ways of plea-[antne | s.

It was not the author's design in this piece (levelled only at this mark, to teach thee how to make use of the strength and grace that is in Christ Jesus, and find the promised ease in performance of duties; in handling of which argument, he hath been remarkably assisted; and thou canst not read with attention, but thou must bear him witness, and bless the Lord on his behalf, that he hath hit the mark at which he aimed) to engage in a formal debate with these audacious moralists, who would boast and bogle us out of the good old away, wherein if men walk they must find rest to their souls: yet if by the doctrine he hath here explained and pressed, as the only way of life, they do not find what a mortal wound he hath given their morality, all the lovers of the truth will see it; and it may be, the Lord sparing

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life, and continuing the same gracious and great affiftance he hath had in engaging with many great adversaries to the truth at home and abroad, they may see somewhat from his en, which may make the lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ incerity, and of the operation of his Spirit, fing over these successors to Sifera, who with their jumping chariots and sattling wheels assault the truth, At his feet they bowed, ex fell, aboy lay down at his feet, they bowed, they fell where they bowed, there they fell down dead; so let all the enemies of thy truth perift, O-Lord. How to make the whole more useful for thee, for whose advantage it is mainly intended, I leave to the author's own direction: only this I must fay, His method and mould wherein he casts this sweet matter, and his way of handling this fo feafonable a subject, is to accommodate to leach case, and brought home to the conscience, and down to the capacity of the meanest Chrithan, which was his aim, that the feeble, in this day, might be as David; that howbeit many worthy men have not only hinted, but enlarged upon the same matter, yet thou can't not but see some heart-endearing singularity in his way of improving and handling this great gofpel-truth. Next, I must tell thee, that as I myself read it with much satisfaction (tho' alas! I dare not fay, I have by reading reaped the designed advantage) so, that thou mayst be blushed into a perusal thereof, and profiting thereby, I must likewise tell thee, I say, it hash been turned into Dutch; and that it hath not only met with great acceptation amongst all the serious and godly in these parts who have seen it, but is much sought after; and they profess themselves singularly thereby edisod, and let a-going after God, by its efficacious perswaliveness, with a finging alacrity: and, if it have not the same effect upon thee and me, they and it will rife up against us in judgment.

Up therefore, Christians, and be doing: listen to such a teacher, who, lest thou tire in thy race or turn back, teacheth thee a certain and sweet way of singular proficiency and progress in the ways of God. It may be, it is not thy work, nor mine, to write books against these soul-murdering (however magnified) methods of taking men off Jesus Christ; but our penury of parts for that, should (1.) put us to seek plenty of tears, that we may weep, to see our Master so wounded by the piercing pens of those, who, to patronize their mock religion, wrest the scriptures, and with wicked hands wring the word of the Lord, till it weep blood: this, I say, should provoke thee and me to weep upon him, till he appear, and best the pens of such deceivers out of their hand by a blow of his. (2.) It should provoke

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us to know the truth, that we may contend cornefly for the faith delivered to the faints, and to have these contradict cruths to imprefied in their life upon our fouls, that the per of the most subtile pleader for this perversion of the gosp may neither delete thefe, nor be able to stagger us; but we may, from the efficacious workings of their, have the wite nels in ourselves, and know the men who teach otherwise not to be of God. (3.) It should be our ambition when the all of religion is cried down, and a painted hadow, a partie (however perfumed) nothing put in its place, to make it appear by our practice, that religion is an elevation of the foul above the sphere and activity of dead morality; and that it is no less or lower principle that acts us, than Christ dwelling in us, and walking in us. How can the love of God, and of Christ, and of the Spirit be in us, if these perverse pratters against the power of godliness provuke us not to emit a practical declaration to the world, and extort a teltimony to his grace by our way, from the enemics thereof? Improve therefore this his special help to that purpole, which in a most seasonable time is brought to thy hand.

Bur, to film up all shortly, there are but three things which make religion an heavy burden. Pirft, The blinds nels of the mind; and here thou art taught to make use of that eye-falve, whereby the eyes of the blind fee out of obscurity and out of darkness; he who formerly erred in spirit, by the light held forth in these lines, may see a surpassing beauty in the ways of God. Secondly, That aversion and unwillingness which is in the mind, whereby the sweet and easy yoke of his commands is spurned at as heavy; in order to the removing thereof, and that thou mayit be among his willing people, here thou halt Christ held forth in his conquering beauty, displaying his banner of love over fouls; fo that thou canft not look upon him as held forth, but faith will bow thy neek to take on his yoke, because it ices it is lined with the love of Christ; and then this love that lines the yoke, thed abroad in the heart, will constrain to a bearing of it. O it must be an easy yoke, because it is love, tender love, that imposeth it; and it must be easy and delightful to the bearer, because it is the nature of love to think the greatest difficulties easy, it thereby an evidence of love's reality may be given to the party beloved. Now, if Christ thought the greatest burden cafy, even that which with its weight wrung these words from him, Now is my foul troubled, &c. to perswade souls of the reality and riches of his love to them; then the foul can think nothing heavy that he imposeth, fince he will

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interprete the bearing of it an evidence of his love to him ! none of his commandments can be grievous to the man now, fince he hath faid, This is the love of God, that we keep ber commandments, Now there is a readiness of mind to do all things without dilbutings and murmurings; as love knows notion in its way, forth is no murmuring dispute: when this question is cleared. Lord, what will thou have me to do? then love bath no mo questions; its greatest disficulty is folved. But, thirdly, When the spirit is willing, there remains yet much weakness. Love kindled in the heart conquers the mind into a compliance with his will, and a complacency in his commands; but its greatest strength is often to weep over a withered hand. Now, that thy hands which fall down may be made strong for labour, and thou mayft be girded with thrength, and have grace for grace. yea, all grace, to make thee abound unto every good word and work; the author leads thee up unto the full fountain of all goldel-ferniture and strength; and teacheth thee how to make the of Jefus Christ, as thy sufficiency, for working all thy works in thee and for thee. Take heart therefore unto thee: when thy looking unto duty may make thee despair of performance, lift up thine eyes to him, who is here let before thee; look till every new look upward bring light and life inward, and capacitate thee for making a new look foreward, in the power of his might. He was but a wicked fervant who faid, I know thou art a hard mafter: No. It is falle. That religion which gives eafe must be an easy religion; and truly fuch is gospel-holiness, not only in regard that it is the liberation of the foul from the baseft bondage, but in regard that he who is the mafter will be ferved of his own; thy allowed supplies for all commanded duties are full measure, heaped up, shaken together, and running over. And tho the who hath much hath nothing over, yet he who hath little hath no inlack; for he abounds towards us in all will dom. I fay therefore again unto thee. Take heart, ler not thine hands fall down; effay nothing thou wouldft have well done or eafily done, in thine own strength: but yet, how difficult soever the duty be, approach it as having no confidence in the flesh, but with an eye to thy stock, that rich storehouse of all furniture; and it shall be with thee, as it was with the priests, before whom gordan recoiled, to foon as their foot entred within the brink; God shall make thy difficulties evanish, and, by the illapses of the Spirit of power and might from Jesus Christ depended upon, shall so strengthen thee, that thy duty is made easy to admiration, and becomes the delight of thy foul, But I have exceeded the just limits of

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an epiftle: pray for the continuance of the life of the author, who, by his afficuous working for Christ, hath been often near unto death, not regarding his own life, to supply the lack of other mens service to the interest and church of God; and let him be comforted for this piece of travel undertaken for thy soul's interest, by hearing thou doll improve it to thy advantage, for which it is so exactly calculate: and withall, I beg thy servent and carnest intercessions for grace, and more grace, to him who is

Thy poor, yet foul's well-wisher and fervant for Christ's sake,

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## The Author to the Reader.

Christian Reader.

A Fter the foregoing address, I need not put thee to much more trouble: only I shall fay, That be must needs be a great stranger in our tirael, or fadly smitten with that epidemick plague of indifferency, which bath infected many of this generation, to a benumming of them, and rendring them insensible and unconcerned in the matters of God and of their own fouls, and funk deep into the gulph of dreadful inconsideration, who feeth not, or taketh no notice of, nor is troubled at, the manifest and terrible appearances of the inexpressibly great hazard, our all as Chriflians, in this life, is this day into; I mean, the mystery of the gospel of the grace of God, wherein the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us thro' Christ Jefus, hath been shown. We have enjoyed for a considerable time a clear and powerful dispensation bereof in great purity and plenty; but, alas! is it not manifest to all, that will not wilfully fout their eyes, that this mercy and goodness of God bath been wickedly abused, and the pure administration of his grace and love perfidionsly sinned away, by this apostate generation? Are our spots this day, the spots of his children? Are there fruits answerable to the Lord's pains and labour about us, to be seen even among the greatest of professors? Is there that gospel-holiness, tenderness, watchfulness, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that growing up in Christ in all things, that heavenly-mindedness, that fellowship with the Father and with his Son Christ Jesus, and that conversation in heaven, that the dispensation of trace we have been favoured with beyond many, and bave

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have been long living under, did call for as our handst who can think it strange, if it be fo? ) the Lord be be about to contend with us, by covering our boriwith Egyptian darkness: many, subo would not rebeing already given up to ftrong delution, that they should believe a lies and many me in her and to eive the love of the truth, that they might be faved, eve a lie, and many me in bazard to be drawn afide to crooked paths, by men of corrupt minds, who have been and are fill bufy to cent and foread abroad, with no little petulency and confidence, damnable doctrines, to the perverting of the doctrine of the golpel of Jesus Christ, and to the subverting and overturning of the very foundations of our hope d allueance, and that in fuch a evay, and by fuch means nd fratagems, as feem to bave wrath written upon them ible letters: for, the more plausible and taking a corrupt drine be, it is the more dangerous and judgment-like, and mo are thereby in bazard to be deluded and drawn away.

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Nay (which is yet more terrible and dreadful) it is to be wed, that the jealous God, in his holy and righteous judgment, bath given a providential commission (to speak so) unto the seducing spirit, to persuade and prevail: for, is not this the clear language of the present boly and righteous dispensations of God, and of the stupendiously indifferent frame and disposition of the generality of men, called Christians, not and prevaoking God to spew them out of his mouth, but disposing them also unto a receiving of what care ing them also unto a receiving of what sever men, lying in the deceive, hall propose and obtrude?

Alas! the clouds are not now a-gathering, but our horizon overed over with blackness, and great drops are a falling, presage a terrible overflowing deluge of error, and apo-Sely from the truth and profession of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to be at hand, if the Lord wonderfully prevent it not And behold (O wonderful!) the generality of professors are sleeping in security, apprehending no danger. Satan is more cumning now, than to drive men to Popery by rape and cruel to do after this man ty; (and yet what be may be permitted to do after this man mer, subo can tell?) or by openly pleading, in his emissaries, for this abomination, (and yet even thus is be already prevailing with not a few) or to fend forth his agents for Attoo much prevailing) but his main work now jeemeth to be, to bring in another goisel (and yet there is not another) of rather an anticvangelick and antichristian delusory dream, overturning at once the subole gofpel of our Lord and Savious Fefus Christ, and for this end be employeth the Quakers the one hand, men of desperate and aptisuangelisk principles

xlvii the very fink of all abominations old and late (as I hall flow, if the Lard will consinue health and frength, in an examination of their doctrine and principles, lately emitted by a Robert Barciag) and on the other hand, men (or Moralifts i you will call them for pleading for and crying up an aut evangelick holinels, a mere hadow without Jubstance on ality; and that in place of Christ bimfelf. And, in ora the corrying on of this desperate design, the old dragon is playing men of feeming different principles and ways, wh the their faces form to look to contrary airths, yet be bold notwithstanding fast tied by their tails (as Samson's fore evere) that thereby, if the Lord pormit it, be may, by the fire of emmity to the pure gaspel of the grace of God, in their tails, cause a conflagration of that truth, wherein ! eth all our base a for this new model of religion, that me are fo bufied about, is fuch as Pelagians, Arminians, It pifts, Socinians, Quakers, yea Turks, and moral Hea yea, and all who are enemies to and not reconcilable with the true grace of God bald forth in the goffel, quilt with admit of, and harmoniously agree in , a way which comp so well with proud falf, and with the corrupt nature of that it is little monder if it have many abouters and ad I hall fay so more of this, feeing my beloved brother bath so much to it aiready, to very good purpose, in the foreg

That fure the confideration of this fould move all, in whom is my thing of the Leal of God, and love to their own and others, to appear in defence of the coffee of faloation, by all means incumbent to them, and possible them; for if this citadel and from hold, where and the all of pure and true religion, heth, be blown we are gone; and indeed no less is intended by this undebriftian and antievangelick enemy, than the atter Subver of true Christian religion. Who would not then be bere med, and upon their guard, when matters are at this Should not all, who have any love to their own fouls zeal for the glory of Christ, anointed of the Fasher to be Prophet, Pricft and King; any defire to fee the crown ribing upon his bead, and to have the gofpel preferon and incorrupted, he pleading with God by prayer, in the be-balf of his san's kingdom, crown and glosy; and corefling with him, till be were pleased to dispet these clouds, a cent this black day? Especially, sould they not be labour to be acquainted in truth and reality with the golpel of ge Christ, that baying the my serious trushs thereof imprint on their fouls, and their bearts east into its mould, the he preferred from the burn of their deadly posson ? for a

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Alvin The Author to the Reader.

with a constant dependence upon and use-making of Christian all his offices, will prove the best preservative against this

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The persuasion evhereof did induce me to publish the folwing beads of some fermons, after they had been translated to Dutch, and published bere : knowing that they might be f no less use to the people of God in Britain and Ireland. I not not a more effectual mean to keep unstable souls from Eding with and embracing every new notion, and from being carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the fleight of men, and cunning craftinels whereby they ly in wait to deceive, than to put them upon the real exercise of gospelgodliness, and to the daily practice of the main and fundsmental golpel-work, of living by faith in Jesus Christ, and of growing up into him in all things, who is the head, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the el ectual working in the measure of every part, maketh in crease of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love. ich I am sure, as have thus learned the truth as it is in Solut, and are practifing the same accordingly, will have an artidote within them against the strongest poison of these sersi and a real ansever to, and confutation of, all their while fophisms. The foul exercising itself unto gospel-godliness will find work enough to take it wholly up, and find fuch a folia ground to fland upon, and fee fuch a latisfying fulnets answering all its necessities and wants, and such a fure heart-quieting ground of peace, hope and confolation in Jehis Christ, as that it will have no deifure and small temptation to liften to feducing perverters, and no inclination to feek after empty differns. 21 bas 5100 to his

Aknow, much may be defiderated in this following treatise, and many may have exceptions not suithout ground against it. Some may think it arragancy and too great confidence in me, to attempt the bandling of Juch a my ferious and necessary part of christian practice, wherein few (if any so far as I. know) have gone before, in direct handling of this matter, at least in this method and order, I mean that part, which is about functification wothers may be diffleafed with the mean and low file, with my multiplying of particulars, which might have been better and more handsomly couched under feaver heads, and with my unnecessary contracting of the subole into such narrow bounds, and other things of that kind for which, and many other failings of the like nature and import, which may without any diligent fearch be found in it even by ordinary and unprejudiced readers, I ball not industriously labour to apologize, knowing that my very apo-

logy in this case, will need an apology. Only I hall say this; That considering bow the snare which the vigilant and active enemy of our salvation, the devil, was laying by an unboly morality, did nearly concern all, and especially the meanest (for parts and experience) and less fixed Christians, I thought a discourse on such a subject, as I judged most necessary as all times, and especially in such a day of bazard, bould be framed to the capacity of one, as well as another. under standing can receive benefit by that abbich is calculate to the capacity of children, when these can read little edification by what is suited to the palate of those: and the less experienced, or such as are of lower understanding, will be less able to draw a general to a particular, or to improve, and so fully to comprehend one particular touched, at to be able thereby to understand and take in a like particular not mentioned; than such as have their senses more exercised, and are thereby in case to make a better improvement of what is but compendiously declared, when those must have the bread broken to their hand, or they wall receive but small edification thereby and yet, I suppose, the judicious will observe some variety; fmaller or greater, even where particulars feem to be, at the first view, most unnecessarily multiplied. I know, and willingly grant (for it is obvious enough) that a discourse of this subject and matter might have required a far larger volume; but then, bow sould such have profited thereby, whom poverty might possibly have scarred from buying, or the necessary affairs of their ordinary callings would have kept from a diligent perusal of it? And I thought that neither of these bould have been overlooked in this special or general design which I have before mine eyes.

One thing, as my answer to all, I shall but add: If others, whom the Lord hath more enabled with all necessaries for such a work, shall be bereby either instigated or encouraged write upon this subject (I mean mainly the last part theref, touching the use-making of Christ in Sanctification; for ble fed be the Lord, many bave been employed of the Lord to peak soundly and edifyingly, unto the use-making of Christ s to righteousness and justification) a full, plain, edifying nd satisfying discovery of this necessary and important buth, viz. Christ made of God to us wildom, righteouinels, anctification and redemption: and withall point out plainly and particularly the way how believers, in all their particular ar and various exigencies, may and sould so make use of and apply that all-fulness, which is treasured up in the bea or the benefit and advantage of the members of the mystical ody, at they may not only theoretically see, but practicals o experience, this truth, That in him they are complete

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and so they may be belied to understand bow, thro the ne-cossary and constant use making of him as all in all, they may grow up in him in all things: if this be, I say, done by any to better purpose, I hall think this my adventure not also-

As for thee, O Christian, whose instruction, edification and confirmation in the faith of our Lord Jefus Christ, the faith which was once delivered unto the faints, I mainly ided in this undertaking, I have a few things to add! Know then, that there are certain men (as the apostie Jude speaketh) crept in unawares, who were of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ; for in these last days, we see that these perillous times are come (of which Paul advertised Timothy, 2 Tim. 3. 1, &c.) wherein men shall be lovers of their own felves, covetous, boafters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, falle acculers (or make-bates) incontinent, fierce, despifers of these thar are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleafure more than lovers of God, having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.—for of this forture they, which creep into houses, and lead captive filly women, laden with fins, led away with divers lufts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And, because it is so, be exhau ted to give diligence to make your calling and election fure, by giving all diligence to add to faith virtue; to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godlines brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; as the apostu Peter assureth us, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 10. for it is the elect, who are secured from full and final defection and apostaly, Mat. 24 24 Mark 13. 22. Rom. 11. 5, 7. and 9.11. and 8.33. Mat. 24.
31. Mark 13. 27. and the promiser of salvation is made to such as shall endure to the end. The crown is for the over comers, and such as are faithful to the death, Mat. 10.22 and 24. 13. Mark 13. 13. Rev. 2. 10, 11, 17, 26, 27, 28: and 3. 5, 12, 21. All which, and the like, are fet down, that bereby his people might be rationally moved to a constant fer oulness in the working out of their own salvation in feat bereu and trembling; and the forewarnings given of the great dif ficulty of the reaching the end of our faith, the laivation of our fouls, because of the many active, vigilant, indefat de, dear the g gable, fubtile and infinuating adversaries, who by goo fice, verds and fair speeches will readily deceive the hearts

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the fimple, are to awaken the more bis people to be fober and rigilant, because their adversary the devil (who affeth thods and motions, fo as he may best, according to the vatious tempers, profest dispositions, advantages or disadvantages of such as he intendeth to seduce, which he carefully studies and plies for this end, obtain his designed end, their ruin and destruction) as a roring lion, walking about feeking whom he may devour. And this calleth them to hafte but of their stumber and security, left their adversary. who will be loth to miss his opportunity, surprise them, to their

great loss and disadvantage.

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It is, beloved, high time now to awake, to look about us to confider where we are, upon what ground we fland, whether the enemy or we have the advantage, both and in wha posture we are to rencounter with deceivers that feek to cheat si of all of our fouls, and of the Lord our righteoufness. and draw us off the paths of life, that when we come to die (beside the unspeakable great loss we would thereby be at even here, in missing the comfortable accesses to God thro lefus Christ she in-flowings of grace and strength for spirit tial dirty thro' the Lord our strength, the sweet communications of peace and joy in the Holy Ghoft, the sheddings-abroad of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is iven unto us, and the full affurance of hope, theo' the Lord efus our hope) we might be frustrated of all our expectatius, and find that all that which men made us grip to, lay old on, and lean unto, instead of Christ, was but a mere virtue adow, and a lie in our right-hand, to the unexpressible emperief, vexation and forrow of foul, when all fould end in a dlines y: for readful and horrible disappointment,

But let us not think that our purpoles, firm-like resolutions adhere to the truth, and our present abhorrence at and destation of errors now broached, to the overturning of the try foundations of true Christianity, will jufficiently guard from, and make us proof against, the bots and affaults of ese crafty seducers; nor think that our learning and know ige in the theory of the truth, nor our abilities to renco Cophilters, will fecure us from a fall: let us not thin at the enemies are contemptible, and therefore we no the less anxious, nor yet think that former experiences d through-bearings, in the like cases, will be a pillow bereupon we may now lay ourselves down to sleep: if de, we shall certainly deceive ourselves, if all our strength slanding be in ourselves and thro, ourselves, and if this by goo the ground of our hope, the righteons Lord, in his by

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never be forgotten by us; and such as tempt the Lord base no ground to expect his last issue. Our strength must be in Christ; to the Rock of ages must we fee; to our chambers in him must we retire, and there must she hide ourselves: on Corist's lee-side can see only ride fate, and be free of the hazard of the ftorm. To him therefore must our recourse be daily, by new and fresh acts of faith in and thro' him and his influences, communicated according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, thro faith eying the promiler, the promile, with the price purchaling, and so drawing and fucking light, direction, strength, stability, and what our present exigent calleth for, must we think to stand. And bappy they who conscious to themselves of their own weak nels, and convinced of the insufficiency of all things within them, in godly fear bide themselves under the wings of the Almighty, and get in into this strong hold, resolving there to abide, and there to be secured from all their adversaries within, or without: These humble scarers may expect a safe and noble outgate; when more strong-like and more confident adventurers ball (being left to themselves, because trufing in themselver) shamefully fall, and be triumphed over by the enemy, to the grief of the godly, and for a mare to others.

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The best way then to keep the faith of Christ, which many are now feeking to shake and to loofe us from, is to be exerci-fing the faith of Christ. The ferious and upright practifing of the Gospel is the only best mean to keep thee firm in the profession of the gospel: when the gospel with thee is not a few fine notions in the brain, but is heavenly and necessary truth Junk into the heart, and living and acting there, it will keep thee, and thou wilt own it more firmly and stedfastly in a day of trial. Thy walking in Christ, and working and living by him living in thee, will fo root thee in the gospel-truth that enemies will pull in vain, when seeking to overthrow thee. The gospel of the grace of God received and entertain ned in thy foul in love, and conftant suitable improvement, wil fortify thee, and secure itself in thee, so that vehement blast fall but contribute to its more fixed abode, and more fruitfu actings in thee. Live up then to the gospel, and so be sure it, and be fafe in it: I mean, let Christ live in thee as the all, and caft all thy care and cumber on him; lay all thy diff culties before him; lean all thy weight upon him; draw a thy necessities out of him; undertake all thy duties in him be strong in him, and in the power of his might, let him thy counsellor, conducter, leader, reacher, captain, con mander, light, life, firength and all ; fo halt thou fram and have cause to glory even in thy infirmities; for thou ha

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find the power of Christ resting upon thee, and thou shalt base cause to say, Therefore I take pleasure in informities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong Remember that great word, Phil. 4. 13. I can do all things

through Christ which strengthneth me.

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It hath been the usual and ordinary question of believers, How shall we make use of Christ for sanctification? To this great and important question, I (though the meanest and most unfit for such a work, of all that God bath sent to feed bis flock) have adventured, or endeavoured at least, to give such as truly defire to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the fieth and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, some satisfaction berein: laying before them some plain directions framed to their capacities, and suited to some of their most ordinary and usual cases; some whereof are more comprehensive, and others, more particular, may be looked upon as exemplary instances, serving for other cases of the like nature: for hardly could every particular circumstantiate case be particularly spoken to, and some might judge that to be superfluous. If thou, in the light and strength of Christ, balt really practife what is here pointed forth, I may be confident to fay, Thy labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, and thou shalt attain to another fort of boliness than that which proud pretenders boalt of, and shalt be far without the reach of that snare which unstable jouls are too readily entangled with, I mean the plaufible pretention of more than ordinary Sanctity, which yet is but forced, feigned, constrained, mostly external, and framed to cause some admiration in beholders, whom they intend to make a prey of. This shall be no temptation to thee, who by experience findeth a more safe, satisfying, full, free, easy, pleasant and heartsom way of mortifying lufts, growing in grace and in the knowledge of selus Christ, and so perfecting holiness, by running immediately to Christ, and by living in and upon him, who is made of God to us, wildom, righteoulnels, fanctification it blaft. and redemption. That the Lord may bless the same to thee, fruitfu or this end, hall be and is the defire and prayer of him, who fure o thy fervant in the work of the Gospel, as th

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## CHRIST

The Way, the Truth, and the Life.

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A Discovery of the right Way of making use of Christ for Sanctification:

From John 14. 6. Fesus saith unto them, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no Mail ameth unto the Father but by me.

## CHAP. L

The Introduction with some general Observations from the Cohesion.

OUBTLESS it is always useful, year necessary, for the children of God, to know the right way of making use of Christ, who is made all things to them which they need, even Wisdom, Righteousness, Santification and Redemption,

cessary for believers to be clear and distinct in this matter, than when Satan by all means is seeking to pervert the right ways of the Lord, and one way or other to lead souls away, and draw them off Christ; knowing that, if he prevail here, he hath gained his point: and therefore he endeavoureth not only to darken it by error either more gross or more subtile, but also to darken it by mistakes and prejudices; whence it cometh to pass, that not only strangers are made to wander out of the way, but oftentimes many of his own people are

walking in the darkness of ignorance and mistakes, and remain lean thro want of the real exercise of the life of faith, which would make them fat and flourishing, because it would make them strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and to grow up in Christ in all things.

The clearing up then of this truth cannot but be most feafonable now, when Satan is prevailing with many, whom he cannot get tempted to lookers and profanity. to fit down upon something which is not Christ, and to rest upon something within themselves, distinct from him, both in the matter of Juftification and Sandification. This subtile adversary is now setting some a-work, to cry up, by preaching, speaking and printing, a way to heaven which is not Christ; a kind of morality, civility and outward holiness, whereupon the soul is to rest: and this holiness, not wrought and effectuated thro' the frength of Jefus, by faith fucking life and furniture from him; but thro our own art and skill: which in effect is nothing but an extract of refined Popery, Socinianism and Arminianism, devised and broached of purpose to draw the foul off Christ, that he may stand upon his own legs, and walk by his own power, and thank himself, at least in part, for the crown at length.

Further, thro' the great goodness of God, the true way of a foul's justification is admirably cleared up; and many are, at least theoretically, acquainted therewith; and many also practically, to the quieting of their wakned consciences, and stopping the mouth of their occusers, and obtaining of peace, joy, and the lively foul profess their unacquaintedness with the solid and thriving way of use-making of Christ for growth in grace and true Sanstification; therefore some discovery of the but here cannot but be useful, scasonable, yea, and ecceptable unto them. If he, who is the Truth, would live grace to understand and to unfold this so necessary nd always advantagious a Truth, and would help to write of and explain this Truth by faith in him who is ere faid to be the Truth, then should we have gause o bless and magnify his name: but if he, hecture of in, shall hide himself, and not let out those beams of

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light, whereby we might discover light, we shall but darken counsel with words without knowledge, and leave the matter as unclear as ever. Therefore is it necessary there be both in him that writeth, and in such as read, a single dependence on him, who is given for a leader, If a. 55. 5. and hath promised to bring the blind by a way which they knew not, and to lead them in paths that they had not known, and to make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight, Isa. 42. 16. that thus, by acting faith on him, we may find, in so far, the truth of this verified, viz. That he is the Way, the Truth.

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Now, for clearing up of this matter, we would know that our Lord Jesus, from the beginning of this Chap. ter, is laying down some grounds of consolation, sufficient to comfort his disciples against the sad news of his departure and death, and to encourage them against the fears they had of much evil to befal them when their Lord and Master should be taken from them; which is a fufficient proof of the tender heart of Jesus, who alloweth all his followers firing confolation against all fears, hazards, troubles and perplexities which they can meet with in their way. He will not leave them comfortless; and therefore he layeth down flrong grounds of confolation, to support their drooping and fainting hearts; as loving to see his followers rejoicing always in the Lord, and finging in the ways of Zion; that the world may fee and be convinced of a reality in Christianity; and of the preferableness of that life, not withflanding of all the troubles that attend it, unto any other, how fweet and definable so ever it may appear to Hesh and blood.

In profecution of which design, he told them, v. 4 that they knew whither he went, and the way also he was to take, and by which he was to bring them to the Father, to the mansions spoken of, and so to life a ternal. But Thomas rashly and uncredulously (as to usually he did, Chap. 11. 16. & 20. 25.) venteth him self, and little less then contradicteth his Master, saying v. 5. We know not whither thou goest, and how can a know the way? Wherein we have an emblem of man

believer, who may have more grace and knowledge of God and of Christ than they will be able to see or at knowledge that they have, what thro temptations, in ward diffempers, fense of their many defects and great ignorance, strong defires of high measures, clearer difcoveries of the valtness of the object, mistakes about the true nature of grace, despising the day of small things, and indiffinctness as to the actings of grace, or want of understanding and right uptaking of grace in its various outgoings and actings under various no-

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Whereupon Christ, after his usual manner, taketh occasion to clear up that ground of consolation further unto them, and to let them fee the true way of coming to the Father, that thereby they might be helped to fee that they were not fuch strangers unto the way as they supposed: and withal, he amplifieth and layeth out the properties and excellencies of this way, as being the only true and living way; and that in fuch a manner, as they might both fee the way to be perfect, full, fafe, faving and fatisfying; and also learn their duty of improving this way always, and in all things, until they came home at length to the Father; faying, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: no man cometh to the Father but by me: soul has a second has

Christ then saying, that he not only is the Way to the Father, even the true way, but that he is so the true way, as that he is also Truth itself in the abfiract, and so the living way, that he is Life itself in the abstract, giveth us ground to consider after what manner it is that he is the Truth and the Life, as well as the Way, and that for the clearing up and discovering of his being an absolutely perfect, transcendently excellent, incomparably preferable, and fully fatisfying way, uleful to believers in all cases, all exigents, all diffresses, all difficulties, all trials, all temptations, all doubts, all perplexities, and in all causes or occasions of diffempers, fears, faintings, discouragements, &c. which they may meet with in their way to heaven. And this will lead us to clear up the duty of believers on the other hand, and to the how they should, in all their various cales and difficulSome Generals proposed.

ties, make use of Christ as the only all-sufficient Way to
the Father, and as Truth and Life in the way: and so
we will be led to speak of Christ's being to his people
all that is requisite for them here in the way, whether
for justification or sandification; and how people are to
make use of him, as being all, or as being made of
God to us Wisdom, Righteonsness, Sandification and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1, 30.

Here we come to the words in particular, we would look upon them as having relation to Thomas his words in the preceeding verse, wherein he did little less than contradict what Christ had said in the 4. v. and learn

feveral very comfortable points of doctrine, as,

First, That Jesus Christ is very tender of his followers, and will not cast them off, nor upbraid them for every escape, whereby they may provoke him to anger, and grieve his Spirit; but gently passeth by many of their failings, when he findeth they are not obstinate in their mistake, nor perverse in their way. . For, how gently and meekly doth he here pass over Thomas his unhandsom expression, finding that Thomas spoke here, not out of obstinacy and pertinaciousness, but out of ignorance and a mistake? And the reason is, because, 1. Christ knoweth our infirmity and weakness, and is of a tender heart, and therefore will not break the bruifed weed, Ifa. 42. Well knoweth he that rough and untender handling would crush us, and break us all in pieces. And, 2. He is full of bowels of mercy, and can bave compassion on them that are out of the way, and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. 4, 15. & 5.2.

Which truth, as, upon the one hand, it should encourage all to choose him for their leader, and give up themselves to him, who is so tender of his followers; so, upon the other hand, it should rebuke such as are ready to entertain evil and hard thoughts of him, as if he were an hard master, and ill to be followed; and put all from entertaining the least thought of his untender-

ness and want of compassion. But moreover,

breaking out in believers, when they are honeftly and ingenuously laid open before the Lord, will not fear him

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him away, but rather engage him the more to help and: fuccour. Much of Thomas his weakness and corruption appeared in what he faid; yet the fame being hom neftly and ingenuously laid open to Christ, not out of a fpirit of contradiction, but out of a defire to learn, Christ is so far from thrusting him away, that he rather condescenderh the more, out of love and tenderness; to instruct him better, and to clear the way more fully. And that because, I. He knoweth our mould and fashion, how fecklessand frail we are, and that, if he should deal with us according to our folly, we should quickly be destroyed. 2, He is not as man, hasty, rash, proud; but gentle, loving, tender and full of compassion. 3. It is his office and proper work to be an inftructer to the ignorant, and a helper of our infirmities and weakneffes, a physician to bind up and cure our fores and wounds.

Who would not then willingly give up themselves to fuch a teacher, that will not thrust them to the door, nor give them up to themselves, always when their corruptions would provoke him thereunto? And what a madness is this in many, to fland aback from Christ because of their infirmities, and to scar at him because of their weakness, when, the more corruption we find, the more should we run to him? and it is soon enough to depart from Christ when he thrusts us away, and faith, .. he will have no more to do with us: yea he will allowus to stay, after we are, as it were, thrice thrust away. Only let us take beed, that we approve not ourselves in our evils, that we hide them not as unwilling to part with them, that we obffinately maintain them not, nor ourselves in them; but that we ly open before him, and deal with him, with honesty, ingenuity and plainness,

Thirdly, We see further, that ignorance ingenuously acknowledged and said open before Christ, puts the soul in a fair way to get more instruction. Themas having andidly, according as he thought in the simplicity of his heart, professed his ignorance, is in a fair way now to get instruction: for this is Christ's work, to instruct

be ignorant, to open the eyes of the blind.

Why then are we so foolish, as to conceal our igno-

rance from him, and to hide our case and condition from him? and why doth not this commend Christ's school to us so much the more? why do we not earry as ingenu-

ous scholars, really desirous to learn? But,

Fourtbly, We may learn, that our ill condition, and diffempers, put into Christ's hand, will have remarkable out-gates and an advantagious iffue; feeing Christ taketh occasion here from Thomas his laying open his condition, not without some mixture of corruption, to clear up the truth more fully and plainly than it was before. For hereby, 1. Christ giveth an open declaration of the glory of his power, mercy, goodness, wifdom, &c. 2. He hath occasion to give a proof of his divine art, and glorious skill of healing difeafed fouls, and of making broken bones stronger than ever they were. 3. Thus he effectually accomplisheth his noble defigns, and perfecteth his work, in a way tending to abase man, by discovering his infirmities and failings; and to glorify himself in his goodness and love. 4. Thus he triumpheth more over Satan, and in a more remarkable and glorious manner destroyeth his works. 5. Thus he declareth how wonderfully he can make all things work together for good to his chosen ones, that love him, and follow him. 6. Yea, thus he' engageth fouls to wonder more at his divine wildom and power; to despair less in time coming, when cases would seem hard; to acknowledge his great and wonderful grace, and his infinite power and wildom, that can bring death out of life; and also to be more sensible of the mercy, and thankful for it.

O believer, what matter of joy is here? how happy art thou, that hast given up thyself to him! thy worst condition can turn to thy advantage. He can make thy ignorance, vented with a mixture of corruption, turn to the increase of thy knowledge. Bless him for this; and with joy and satisfaction abide thou under his tutory, and at his school. And withal, be not discouraged, be thy case of ignorance and corruption what it will; lay it out before him with sincerity and singleness of heart, and then thou mayst glovy in thine infirmities, that the power of Gbrist may rest on thee, 2 Cor. 12.9 for

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Some Generals proposed. thou shalt fee, in due time, what advantage infinite love

and wifdom can bring to thy foul thereby.

May not this be a firong motive to induce firangers to give up themselves to him, who will sweetly take occafion at their failings and florecomings to help them forward in the way? and what excuse can they have. who fit the call of the gospel, and say in effect they will not go to Christ because their case is not good ? And oh that believers were not fometimes led away with this error of fcarring at Christ, because of infirmities seen and discovered line way that a tol so the han a

Fiftbly, It is remarkable, that, as the disciples did offrimes vent much of their carnal conceptions of the kingdom of Christ, as apprehending it to be some carnal, outward, pompous, flately, and (upon that account) desirable condition; so there might be much of this carnal apprehension lurking under this acknowledgment and question of Thomas: and the Lord, who knew their thoughts, doth here wifely draw them off those notions, and fer them about another study a To tell us. That it is best and most useful and profitable for us, to be much taken up in the study and search of neceffary and fundamental truths, and particularly of the way to the Father. For, 1. Here is the substantial food of the foul: other notions are but vain, and oftentimes they make the case of the soul worse; but the fludy of this is always edifying. 2. The right underflanding of this, and other fundamental truths, will not puff up, but keep the foul humble, and will make the foul active and diligent in duty. 3. The fruit of this fludy is profitable and lafting 4. And the right uptaking of these truths will discover the vanity of other sciences, fally so called, and the folly of spending our time about other things. 5. The right understanding of this fundamental, will help us to understand other: truths the better. 6. A mistake in this and such like fundamentals, or the ignorance of them, is more dangerous than the ignorance of or a mistake in other things.

Oh if this were reaching us all, in humility, to be much in the fludy of fuch fundamental necessary truths as this is; and to guard against a piece of vanity in af-

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a puffing of us up with pride and conceit !

satisfy. We may here take notice of what may ferve to discover Thomas his mistake, and what is the ground of Christ's affertion, o. 4. which Thomas doth little less than contradict, o. 5. voic. That such as had any acquaintance with Christ, did, according to the measure of their knowledge of him, both know heaven and the way to it. Whence we fee those truths:

Christ, and yet be for a time very indistinct in their sotions about him, and apprehensions of him. They may know Christ in some measure, and yet look upon themselves as great strangers to the knowledge of heaven, and be of complaining of their ignorance of the right

way to heaven.

where there is the least measure of true acquaintence with Christ, with love to him, and a delire to know more of him, Christ will take notice thereof, the it be covered over with a heap of mistakes, and accompanied with much ignorance, weakness and indistinct ries. He feeth not as man feeth; which is good news to some, that are weak in knowledge, and unable to give any good account of any knowledge they have; yet one thing they can say, That he cohe knoweth all

shing y knowesh that they love him.

Nations are the dispensations of God's grace unto his own. To some he giveth a greater, to others a lefter measure of knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; and to one and the same person, more at one time than at another. Various are his manifestations and outlettings of grace and love. Small beginnings may come to much at length. Thomas and the rest of the disciples had but little clear and distinct apprehensions of the way of faivation thro Jelus Christ; and yet, ere all was done, they attained to such a measure of understanding in the mysteries of God; as that we are said to be built upon the foundation of the apostles; Christ Jesus being the chief corner some Eph. 2. 20. This should teach the best much sobriety, and not to judge of all by themselves; or to think, that

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that God's way with them must be is flandard on a rule whereby to judge of all the rest, is if his way of dealing were one and the same with all and

4. The knowledge of Christ is all Know him and we know ficaven and the way to it: for upon this ground doth Christ make good what he had faid touching their knowing whicher he went, and the way; and untwerest the objection that Thomas did propose, care because he was the way; &od and they being acquaint with him (which here is prefuppoled) were not ignorant of the place whither he was going, nor of the way leading thinher. The knowledge then of Jefus Christ is a real and full compend of all faving knowledge. Hence it is life seemal to know bilm, John 17.9. They that know him, know the Father; they that the him, fee the Father also, John 14. 9. He is in the Father, and the Father in him, Fobn 14, 10, 11. & 10, 38. & 17.21. and fo, knowing him, they know heaven; for, what is heaven elfe but the prefence and glorious manifeftitions of the Father? for, when Christ speaks of his going to heaven, he faith, He was going to the Rathe. So, knowing him, they knew the way, both how Chrit was to go to heaven as our cautioner, head and attoney; and how we must follow.

Let then a man have never to much knowledge, and be acquainted with the mysteries of all arts and sciences, and with the depths of nature, and intreagues of states, and all the theory of religion; if he be unacquainted with Jesus Christ, he knoweth nothing ashe

ought to know.

And, upon the other hand, let a poor foul, that is honest, and hath some knowledge of and acquaintance with him, be satisfied, tho it cannot discourse, nor dispute, nor speak to cases of conscience, as some others. If we know him, it matters not the we be ignorant of many things, and thereby become less effected of by others. Here is the true test, by which we may take a right estimate of our own or others knowledge: the true rule to try knowledge by, is not since notions, clear and distinct expressions, but heart acquaintance.

of the Words in general.

acquaintance with him; in whom are hid all she tredfured
of wisdom and knowledge; Col. 2. 3.

which would be a compendious way for us to know all!

Why frend we our money for that which is not bread, and
our labour for that which will not profit us? Why wafte
re our time and spirits, in learning this science, and
that art, when alas, after we with much labour and
will have attained to the yondmost pitch there, we are
sever one whit the nearer heaven and happiness? yea,
to were well if we were not surther off. Oh if we
were wife at length, and could think more on this
me thing necessary, and could be stirred up to learn
more of him, and to make this the subject of all our

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Of the Words themfelves in general.

E come now to the words themselves, wherein Christ asserts that he is (1.) The Way, (2.) The Iruth, (3.) The Life, and (4.) That no man cometh the Father but by him.

In them we learn those two things in general;

First, The misery of wretched man by nature: this cannot be in a few words expressed.

These words will point out those particulars thereof,

which we will but mention;

flance from God, by vertue of the curse of the broken covenant of life made with Adam.

himself. His way is not in himself; he hath need of

another to be his way.

take by-ways and to wander; yea, he loveth to wander: he goeth aftray as foon as he is born, speaking lies.

4. He cannot differn the true way, but is blinded

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Of the Words in general.

with prejudice thereat, and full of Miffakes; he'is no.

thing but a lump of error. 5. He is dead legally and really; how can he then come home? how can he walk in the way, tho it

were pointed out to him?

6. He, even when entred into the way, is subject to fo many faintings, Iwooonings, upfittings, &c. that except he get new quickning, he must ly by the way. and perish.

In a word, his mifery is fuch as cannot be expressed. for as little as it is believed and laid to heart, or feen

and mourned for and lamented.

Now, for a ground to our following discourse, I would press the solid, thorow and sensible apprehension of this, without which there will be no use-making or application of Christ: for the whole need not the phyfician, but the fick; and Christ is not come to call the righteous, but finners to repentance, Mat. 9. 12. Mark Yea, believers themselves would live within the fight of this, and not forget their frailty: for the here be a change wrought in them, yet they are not perfect, but will have need of Christ as the Way, the Iruth and the Life, till he bring them in, and fer them own upon the throne, and crown them with the crown f life. And O happy they, who must not walk one pot without this guide, leading them by the hand, or ather carrying them in his arms! Let all them, who ould make use of Christ, remember what they were, nd what they are, and keep the sense of their frailty nd misery fresh; that seeing their need of him, they ay be in better case to look out to him for help and pply, and be more distinct in their application of of

The fecond general is, That Christ is a compleat Meator, throughly furnished for all our necessities. Are at a distance from the Father? he is a Way to ing us together. Are we wandered out of the way? is the Way to us. Are we blind and ignorant? he the Truth, Are we dead? he is the Life. Concerg this fulness and compleatness of his, we would

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Of the Words in general. That he is throughly furnified with all things we frand in need of : the Way, the Truth and the Life. He hath eye-falor, clothing, gold tried in the fire, Co. for the Spirit of the Lord is upon bim, and hath unbinted bim, ha. 61. 1. 2. He is fuitably qualified, not only having a fallefs, and

and an all-fulue s, to that whatever we need is to be had in him; but also a fairable fathefs answering our case to the life. Are we out of the way? he is the Way.

Are we dead? he is Life, &cc.

. He is richly qualified with this fuitable good. He hath not only wiftom and knowledge, but treasures of it yea, all the treasures thereof, Col. 2. 3. There is fulnel in him, wea, it bath pleased the Pather that in bim Should all fainefs devell, Col. 1. 19. Yea, the fulness of the Gal bead develleto in bim bodily, Col. 2. 9.

4. Hence this is an upmaking compleatness and ful nels: for we are faid to be compleat in bien, Col. 2. 10 and he is faid to to be all and in all, Col, 4. 11. He fil

letb all in all, Eph. 1. 23.

5. It is also a satisfying compleatness. The eye is n fatighed with feeing, nor the ear with bearing; the avail cious man is nor farisfied with gold, nor the ambition man with honour, but fill they are crying with the lock leech, Give, give. But the man who getteth Christ full; he fitteth down and crieth, Enough, enough: an no wonder, for he hath all. He can defire no more, h can feek no more; for what can the man want, that compleat in hu.

6. There is here that which will answer all the Ob ctions of a foul, and these sometimes are not few. they fay they cannot know the way to the Father; the he is Truth, to instruct and teach them that, and so enter them into it: and if they fay, they cannot walk that way, nor advance in it one step, but will faint a and fir up, succumb and fall by; he answereth that is the Life, to put life and keep life in them, and cause them to walk, by putting a new principle of in them, and breathing of new on that principle

O thrice happy they who have fled to him for fuge! it is easy for them to answer all objections!

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How Christ is the Way, in general. 67 cavils of Satan and of a false heart; it is easy for them to put Christ to answer all. And, on the other hand, who can tell the misery of such as are strangers to Jesus? how shall their wants be made up? how shall they answer challenges, accusations, temptations, doubts, sears, objections and discouragements cast up in their way?

O should not this endear the way of the gospel to us, and make Christ precious unto us! Is it not a wonder that such an all-sufficient Mediator, who is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God thro' him, should be so little regarded and sought unto, and that there should be so few that embrace him, and take him, as he is of-

fered in the gospel?

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How can this be answered in the day of accounts? what excuse can unbelievers now have? Is not all to be sound in Christ that their case calleth for? Is he not a compleat Mediator, thorowly surnished with all necessaries? Are not the riches of his fulness written on all his dispensations? The mouths then of unbelievers must be for ever stopt.

## CHAP. III.

How Christ is the Way, in general. I am the Way.

WE come now to speak more particularly to the Words; and, I. Of his being a Way. Our design being to point at the way of use-making of Christ, in all our necessities, straits and difficulties which are in our way to heaven; and particularly to point out the way now believers should make use of Christ in all their particular exigencies, and so live by faith in him, walk in him, grow up in him, advance and march forward toward glory in him. It will not be amiss to speak of his fulness of Christ in reference to unbelievers, as octation offereth; because this will help to clear the other.

Before we can clear up how any can make ale of hrift, we must speak something of their necessity of im, and of his being furnished sitly, fully, richly and maryingly for their case; and this will make the way

of use-making of Christ more plain.

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While Christ then says, I am the Way; he points out those things to us:

First, That man is now estranged from the Lord, and in a wandring condition. He hath departed from God; he is revolted and gone. They are all gone out of the way, Rom. 3. 12. They go aftray as soon as they are born, speaking lies, Psal. 58. 3.

2. Nay, not only so, but we love naturally to wander,

2. Nay, not only so, but we love naturally to wander, and to run away from God; as Jeremiab complaineth of that wicked people, Jer. 14. 10. Naturally, with the dromedary, we traverse our ways, Jer. 2. 23. and run hither and thither, but never look towards him. Nay, we are like those spoken of, Job 21. 14. We desire not the knowledge of his ways; we will have none of him, Plal. 81. 11. nor of his reproofs, Prov. 1. 30.

Oh how fad is this! and yet how is it more fad, that this is not believed, nor once considered! And that it is

not believed, is manifest; for,

very well pleased and satisfied with themselves and their condition? They thank the Lord, it was ay well with them; they have no complaints; they see no wants, not necessities; they wonder what makes folk complain a their condition, of their evil heart, or of their hazard and danger; they understand not these matters.

2. Do we not find people very quiet and at reft, the they remain in the congregation of the dead? Prov. 21. 16. They sleep in a found skin, because they see no hazard. The thoughts of their condition never bereave them one night's rest: no challenges have they; all is at peak with them, for the strong man keeps the house.

3. How rare is it to find people exercifed about the matter, and bulied with it in their thoughts, eith while alone, or while in company with others; or on feriously thinking and confidering of it, yea, or so much as suspecting the matter?

4. How rare is it to fee any foul broken in heart, a humbled because of this? who is walking under this under a load? whose soul is bleeding upon the confid ration of this? is there any mourning for this?

5. Where is that to be heard, Men and brethren, "

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shall we do to be faved? How shall we enter into the right way? Where is that good old way, that we may walk in it? Few such questions and cases troubling conficiences; and no wonder, for a deep sleep is upon them,

6. How cometh it then, that the pointing forth of the way is so little hearkned unto? Sure, were this natural condition perceived, a report of the sure and safe way would be much more welcome than it is. Christ by his messengers would not be put to cry so often in vain, This is the way, turn in bither.

Here is enough to convince of this ignorance and infensibleness: but it is his Spirit which convinceth the world of fin, John 16, that must bear home this convi-

ction.

Secondly, It pointeth out to us this; That the way of man is not in himself, Jer. 10. 23. that is, that nothing he can do, can or will prove a way to him to the Father: for Christ is the Way, as excluding all other means and ways. And that man can do nothing to help himself into the way, is clear; for,

1. His way is darkness, Prov. 4. 14. He knoweth no better, he is satisfied therewith, there he sleepeth and

resteth.

2. He cannot, nor doth not defire to return. He hateth to be reformed.

3. Yea, he thinketh himself safe; no man can convince him of the contrary: The way he is in feemeth right to him, tho the end thereof be death, Prov. 14. 12,

& 16. 25.

4. Every man hath his own particular way, to which he turneth, If a. 53. 6. some one thing or other that he is pleased with, and that he thinks will abundantly carry him through, and there resteth he: and what these ordinarily are, we shall hear presently.

5. In this bis way, which yet is a falle way, be trufleth, Hof. 10. 13, he leaneth upon it, little knowing that it will fail him at length, and that he and his hope and

confidence shall perish.

Is it not strange then to see men and women gadding about to seek their eway, as it is said, Fer. 2. 36. as if they could find it out, or as if they could of themselves fall

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upon the way? What a lamentable light is it, to fee people wearying themselves with very lies, Ezek. 24. 12. and wearied in the multitude of their own counsels? Isa. 47. 15.

But what are those false and lying ways which men weary themselves in, and all in vain, and which they choose and trust unto, and yet are not the way which

will prove fafe and fure?

that name fome that are principal and most ordinary;

fuch as,

I. Good purposes and resolutions, with which many deceive themselves, supposing that to be all which is required: and, alas, all their purposes are like to Ephraim's goodness, like the early cloud, and morning dew, that soon evanishesh: their purposes are soon broken off, and soon disappointed, because made without counsel, Prov. 15. 22. Many soolishly rest here, that they have a good mind to do better, and to amend their ways; and they purpose, after such a time or such a time, they shall begin a new manner of life: but their purposes never come to any effect, and so at length they and their purposes both perish.

2. Some convictions and inward challenges. The word now and then pierceth them so far, and fore and sharp dispensations from the Lord so far affect their heart, that they see it is not well with them; and they are made with Saul to cry out, I bave simed, I Sam. 15. 24. and they advance no further; those convictions either die out again, or work no further change: And, poor souls, they think, because at such a fermon or such a communion they had some such convictions and sharp challenges, therefore they imagine all is well with them; when a Judas may have convictions sharper than

ever they had, and a Felix, Acts 24, 25.

3. Convictions followed with some fort of amendment. Some may dreadfully deceive themselves with this, and conclude that all is right with them, and that the way they are in is safe and sure; because they have had convictions, which have been so effectual, as to cause them amend many things, and become, as to many things,

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changed men and women; when, alas! their way is but a way of darkness still; it is not Christ, they have never come to him. Herod hearing John Baptist, had his own convictions and amendments; for be did many things, Mark 6. 20.

4. Many reft upon their outward civility and morality, or negative holiness: They cannot be challenged for gross faults, and that is all the way they have so reft in. Alas! could not a wicked Pharifee say as much as they, viz. That be was no extortioner, unjust person, nor an adulterer, nor such as the Publican was? Luke 18. 11. How many heathens, as to this, shall outstrip such as profess themselves Christians? and yet they lived and died strangers to the right way to happiness. See what

that poor young man faid, Luke 18. 21.

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5. Some may win to more than civility, and attain unto a kind of outward holiness, and outward performance of the duties of religion, such as hearing, reading, prayer, communicating; and rest there, and yet perish: for that is but their own way; it is not the right way. Had not the soolish virgins lamps? and did the not wait with the rest? Mat. 25. and will not many say in that day, We have eaten and drunken in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets, to whom Christ shall answer, I know not whence you are, depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity? Luke 13, 26, 27. Were not the Jews much in duties and outward ordinances? and yet see how the Lord rejecteth them all, Ma: 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. & 66, 3.

6. Much knowledge doth deceive many. They think, because they can talk of religion, speak to cases of conficiences, handle places of stripture, and the like, that therefore all is right with them; when, alas! that is but a slippry ground to stand upon. The Pharises sat in Mojes seat, and taught sometimes sound doctrine, and yet were heart-enemies to Jesus, Mat. 23. And will not many think to plead themselves in to heaven, by saying, that they have prophesed in his name? Mat. 7. 22. There is a knowledge that puffeth up, I Gor. 13. 2. Some there are, whose knowledge seemeth to be operative and practical, and not merely speculative. Some may escape

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How Christ is the Way,

the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and yet again become entangled therein and overcome, so that their latter end is worse than the beginning. See 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22, Knowledge, I grant, is good, but it is not Christ; and so it is not the way to the Father; and many, alas! lean

to it, and are deceived at last.

7. A kind of feeming feriousness in the performance of duties, and in feeking of God, deceiveth many. They think, because they are not conscious to their own diffembling, but they look upon themselves as earnest in what they do, that therefore all is well. Saith not Christ, that not every one that faith, Lord, Lord, Shall enter into the kingdom of God? Mat. 7. 21. that is, not every one that reneweth their fuits, and ingeminateth their defires, cry and cry over again, and, as it were, will not give it over: and yet they come fhort of their expectation. Did not the foolish virgins seem earnest and ferious, when they continued waiting with the rest, and at length cried, Lord, Lord, open unto us? and yet they were kept at the door. Many confider not that there is a fecret and closs hypocrify, that some may be under and not know it, as well as a gross hypocrify and diffimulation, which may be eafily observed. Will not many feek to enter in, that shall not be able ? Mat. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24.

8. Many may deceive themselves with this, that they are looked on by others, godly discerning persons and ministers, as good serious Christians, and that they carry so handsomly and fair, that no man can judge otherwise of them than that they are good serious seekers of God. But, alas, the day is coming, which will discover many things; and many one will be deceived both of themselves and of others. Nat be who commended bimself is approved, but whom God approveth, 2 Cor. 10. 18. Therefore Paul exhorts Timothy to study to been bimself approved unto God, 2 Tim. 2. 15. Men look only on the outside, and cannot see in to the heart; but God searcheth the heart; and it is an easy matter to deceive men, but

God will not be deceived.

9. Some may suppose themselves in a safe and sure

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way, if they outfirip others in religious duties, and be much in extraordinary duties, when, alas, for all that, the heart may be rotten. The Phartfee fasted swice a week, Luke 18. 12. and yet was but an enemy to Christ. O how deceitful is the heart of man!

10. Inward peace and quietness of conscience may deceive some; and they may suppose that all is right with them, because they do nothing over the belly of their conscience: their heart doth not accuse them of salshood and dissimulation in their way with God or man; but they do all things according to their light. No doubt that young man, Luke 18. 21. spoke according to his judgment and light, when he said, All these things have I observed from my jouth. And Paul saith of himself, Atts 23. 1. that he had lived in all good conscience before God till that very day; meaning, that, even while he was a Pharisee unconverted, he had not thortured his conscience, nor done any thing directly against it, but had always walked according to his light. See Atts 26. 9.

think their case unquestionable, because they are zealous for their way, and as they think their zeal is pure
zeal for God. Was not Paul, while a Pharisee, very
zealous, when out of zeal to his way he persecuted the
Church? Phil. 3. 6. See my zeal for the Lord, could Jebu say, 2 Kings 10. 16. and the Jews had a zeal of
God, but not according to knowledge, Rom. 10. 2.
and Christ tells us, that such as should persecute the
apostles unto death, would think they did God good

fervice, John 16. 2.

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12. Some also may put it beyond question, that they are in the right way, because they are more strict in all their ways than others, and will not so much as keep sellowship or company with them, saying, with those, Isa. 65. 5. Stand by, I am bolier than thou, come not near to me; who yet are but a smoke in God's nose, and a fire that burneth all the day.

13. Some may rest on, and deceive themselves with, their great attainments, and more than ordinary experiences; when, alas! we see to what a height some may come, and yet prove nothing. Let such souls

read

How Christ is the Way,
send with trembling that word of Paul, 116. 6. 4, 5.
where we see some may come to be inlighted, to taste
of the heavenly gift, to be made partakers of the Holy
Chost, to taste the word of God, and the powers of
the world to come; and yet prove cast aways: taking
these expressions as pointing forth something distinct
from real grace.

Many fuch false ways, wherein men please themselves, might be mentioned. By these every one may
see came of fearching and trying over and over again.
It is a treadful thing to be deceived here, and it is best
to put it to a trial, when there is a possibility of getting the matter belied; and many may fear and
tremble, when they see they are not yet come the length
of many such as fit down without Christ, and lose all
their labour. O if this could put people to a serious
examination and trial of themselves, and of the nature
of their way wherein they are and rest at present!

Thirdly, We might here observe, That this true and living way is but one for all. There is but one Mediator betwirt God and man, I Tim. 2. 5, one Mediator for both Old and New Testament, the Seed of the woman; howbeit the Lord's dispensations with his people, in that one way, may be various; as his way with his people under the law is different from his way with his people under the gospel; and his dispensations with individual believers, whether under the law or under the gospel, is not the same in all things.

And this should teach us to relinquish our own ways, and to enter into this one only way: and it should move such as are in this way to study unity and agreement among themselves; and yet not inser or suppose that God's way with them must be in all things alike. Yea, tho' the Lord's way with them be different from his way with others, and more dark, disconsolate and bitter; yet let them be quiet and silent before the Lord, and acknowledge his goodness that bath brought them into the one only way, Jesus Christ, and keeperh them there.

but, fourthly, The main thing here, and which is obvious, is this, That Jefus Christ is the way to the Father

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Father, the one and only way, the fovereign and end cellent way; and he alone is this way, there is not am nother. Neither is there falvation in any other; for there is not ender name ander beaven given among men, tobereby we must be faved, Acts 4.12.

For clearing of this, we shall speak a little to those

four things, and flew,

i. What is our case, and what need we have of a

2. How Chrift answereth this our case and necessity,

and is a fit way for us.

3. How he alone is this way, and answereth this our

4. What are, the rare advantages and specialities of this way.

And this will make way for our clearing up, how

Christ is made use of as a way by poor sumers.

For the first of these, our present case and necessity, something was spoken to it before; we shall reduce all to those two heads: the first is our state of guilt, and separation from God because of sin and guilt; the next is our state of wickedness and enmity against God.

As to the first, we may take notice of these things

1. That fin original and actual hath separated us from God, and east us out of his favour, and out of that station of favour and friendship which once we were advanced to in Adam.

2. That we are under God's curse and wrath, and excommunicated from the presence of the Lord, by a sad, yet just, sentence according to law; and so are un-

der death.

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As to the next thing, we may take notice of those

1. That we are impure and polluted with fin and

daily iniquity.

2. That we are ignorant of the right way of returning into favour with God, seeking out to ourselves many inventions.

3. That we are impotent for any good work or com-

4. That not only to, but we are unwilling to do any thing

How Christ is the Way, thing that is good, or to enter into the way, when pointed out unto us; yea, we are enemies to God by wicked works, and have an innate harred to all his ways.

into we are: there we love to ly and fleep, and defire

not to be roused up or awakned.

6. We are under the power and command of Satan, who leadeth us out of the way, yea, and driveth us forward in the wrong way, to our perdition.

These things are plain and undeniable, and need no further confirmation, tho, alas! it is little believed and

laid to heart by many.

For the fecond, How Christ answereth this our case and necessity. He is a way to us, to help us out of both these, both out of our state of guilt and separation, and out of our state of wickedness and enmity.

And, first, he helpeth us out of our state of guilt

and feparation,

I. By taking away our guilt and sin, being made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5. 21. He hath filled the great gap betwixt God and us with his body, and hath made of it, as it were, a bridge, by which we may go over unto the Father: we enter now into the boliest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his fless, Heb. 10. 19, 20. we are now brought near by his blood, Eph. 2. 13. so that thro him we are restored again to friendship with God, and made one with him; for Christ the Mediator hath made both one, reconciling Jews and Gentiles both unto God in one body by the cross, buying slain the sumity, Eph. 2. 16.

2. By taking away the curse and wrath that was due to us, being made a curse for us, Gal. 3. 13. so that he is become our peace, and thro' him we have an access by one Spirit anto the Father, and ore no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the boushold of God, Eph. 2. 14, 18, 19. He is set forth to be a profitation through faith in his blood, Rom. 3. 25. 1 John 2. 2. and 4. 10. By him have we now

received the atonement, Rom. 5.11.

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Hence own g Next, he helpeth us out of our flate of wickedness

and enmity,

1. By taking away our impurity and uncleanness, by washing us and cleaning us in his blood, Epb. 5. 26, 27. Col. 1. 22. having purchased grace for us, Epb. 1. 3. we are bleffed with all spiritual bleffings in him. He applieth his merits, and layeth the foundation of grace and holiness in the foul, and carrieth on the work of mortification and vivification; and fo, killing the old man by his Spirit; both meritorioufly and efficiently he cleanfeth and washeth. Hence we are said to be baptifed with bim in bis death, and buried with bim by baptism into death, that we should walk in neconess of life : and fo our old man is crucified with bim, that the body of fin might be deftroyed, that benceforth we bould not ferue fin, Rom. 6. 3, 4, 6. And for our daily infirmities and escapes, whereby we pollute ourselves, his blood is a fountain opened to the boufe of David and to the inhabitants of Ferufalem for fin and uncleanness, Zech. 12. 1. and to this fountain he bringeth, by the Spirit of repentance, which he, as an exalted Prince, bestoweth, Alls 5. 31. and by faith. So, 1 Fobs 2. 1. If any man fin, we have an advocate with the Father,

2. As for our ignorance and blindness, he taketh that away, being given for a light to the Gentiles, Ifa. 42. 6. &t 49. 6. Luke 2. 32. He is sent to open the blind eyes, Isa. 42. 7. to bring out the prisoners from their dark prisons, Isa. 42. 7. &t 61. 1. yea, he is anointed for this end. So that such as walk in darkness see a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light hath shined, Isa. 9. 2. Mat. 4. 15. and he hath eye-salve to give, Rev. 3. 18.

3. He is qualified for taking away our impotency, fo that thro' him we can do all things, Phil. 4. 13. When we are weak, we are strong in him, who is our strength, and liveth in us, 2 Cor. 12. 10. Gal. 2. 20. Hence he worketh in us both to will and to do of his

own good pleafure, Phil. 2. 13.

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4. He also taketh away our natural aversness, unwil-

How Christ is the Way, linguels, wickedness and hatred of his ways, making his people willing in the day of his power, Psal, 110, his he taketh away the sumity that is in us. Col. 2. 20, at. and reconcileth us to God, and to his ways, that our hearts do sweetly comply with them, and we become most willing and glad to walk in them; yea, and to sum the way of his commandments thro' his enlarging of our hearts, Psal, 119, 32.

which we have to ly still in our patural condition; by convincing us of the dreadful hazard thereof, thro' the Spirit of conviction, whereby he convinces the world of it, John 16. 8. and circumcifeth their ear to hear, and maketh them willing to hearken to the coun-

fel of God

breaketh that, by leading saptivity captive, Eph. 4. 8.

Pfal. 68. 18. and spoiling the strong man's bouse: for he to come to destroy the works of the devil, I John 3. 8. and he spoileth principalities and powers, Col. 2, 15. Thus, as captain of salvation, he leadeth them out as a conqueror; having paid the price, he delivereth also by power and authority from the hand of this jaylor.

And thus we fee how he answereth our case and necessity, and is a fit way for us: and the this be not questioned, yet little is it believed and considered, and less

put in practice.

And as for the third particular, That he alone is this way, and answereth our case herein; it needeth not be much spoken to, since it is clear and manifest, confirmed by the experience of all generations, and the disappointments of tools, who have been seeking other ways. Angels in heaven cannot do our husiness; they cannot satisfy justice for us, nor have they any power over our heart to turn it as they will; nay, they are not acquainted with our secret thoughts, that cabinet is kept closs from them, and reserved as the peculiar privilege of God alone. The blood of bulls and goats cannot do it; for the apostle tells us, that it is impossible that that should take away sin, Heb. 10. 4. That blood shed according to the law did cleanse ceremonially, but it is only

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the blood of Joius, typined by that, which cleanleth really: fo that we are functified thro the offering of the body of Jefus Christ once for all, Heb. 10. 10. No pains or labour of ours can avail here : The Lord will not be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ren thoufands of rivers of oil; he will not take our first born for our transgrellion, nor the fon of our body for the fin of our foul, Mic. 6. 7. Ordinances and means will not do it. nor any invention of our own; No man can'ty any means redeem bis brother, or give to God a ranfom for him; for the redemption of the foul is precious, and ceafeth for ever, Pfal. 49. 7, 8. He alone hath laid down the price: all our fufferings, prayers, tears, labours, penances, and the like, fignify nothing here; they cannot fatisfy juflice for one fin.

As to the fourth particular, oiz. the fingularity of this way; those things make it manifest and apparent.

1. This is such a way as can discover itself, and make iffelf known unto the erring traveller : Christ Jeius is fucha way as can fay to the wandring foul, This is the way, walk in it, Ifa. 30. 25. No way can do this. This is comfortable.

2. This way can not only discover itself to the wandring traveller, but also it can bring folk into it. Christ can bring fouls unto himfelf, when they are running on in their wandring condition. He can move their heart to turn into the right way, put grace in their foul for this end, begin retolutions in them, and low the feed of faith; and fo flay their course which they were violently pursuing, and make them look about and confider what they are doing. As the former was good news to poor blind and witlels creatures, that were wandring, and knew not whither they were going; to this is good news to poor fouls, that find their heart inclining to wander, and loving to go aftray.

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3. This way can cause us to walk in it. If we be rebellious and obstinate, he can command with authority: for he is given for a leader and a commander, Ifa. 55. 4. How sweet should this be to the soul, that is weighted with a stubbern, untractable and unperswadable heart, that he as a king, governor and commander, can with

How Christ is the Way,

authority draw, or drive, and cause us tollow and run 4. This way is truth, as well as the way; so that the soul that once entreth in here is safe for ever, no wandring here: The way-faring men, though soils, shall not ere in this way, Isa. 35. 8. He will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and lead them in paths that they have not known; he will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: those things will he do

unto them, and not forfake them, Ifa. 42. 16.

5. This way is also life, and so can revive the fainting and weary traveller: He givet between to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increased strength: Yea, he renews their strength, and makes them mount up with wings as eagles, and run and not he weary, and walk and not faint, Isa. 40. 29, 31. and so he giveth legs to the traveller. Yea, he carrieth the lambs in his bosom, Isa. 40. 11. O who would not walk in this way? what can discourage the man that walketh here? what can he fear? No way can quicken or refresh the weary man; this way can do it: yea, it can quicken one that is as dead, and cause him march on with fresh alacrity and vigour.

6. From all these it followeth, that this way is a most pleasant, heartsom, desirable and comfortable way. The man is safe here, and he may sing in the ways of the Lord, Psal. 138. 5. For wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace, Prov. 3. 17. He is a way that is food, physick, cordials, and all that the poor traveller standeth in need of till he come

home.

From all which, ere we come to particulars, we fhall in general shortly point out those duties, which na-

tively refult thence by way of use.

(r.) O what cause is there here for all of us to fall on wondring, both that God should ever have condescended to have appointed a way how sinners and rebels, that had wickedly departed from him, and deserved to be cast out of his presence and savour for ever, might come back again, and enjoy happiness and selicity in the friendship and savour of that God, that could have got the glory of his justice in our destruction, and stood

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deceitfu this was 13. Lu in no need of us, or of any thing we could do; as also, that he appointed fuch a way; that Jefus Christ his only Son should, to speak so, ly as a bridge betwirt God and finful rebels, and as a high-way, that they might return to the great God, upon him! Let all the creation of God wonder at the wonderful condescending love of God, that appointed fuch a way; and of Christ, that was content to lout for low, as to become this way to us, this new and living way; and that, for this end, he should have taken on flesh, and become Emmanuel. God with us, and tabernacled with us, that through this vail of his flesh he might consecrate a way to us. Let

angels wonder at this condescendency.

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(2.) Hence we may fee ground of being convinced of those things; 1. That naturally we are out of the way to peace and favour with God, and in a way that leadeth to death, and fo, that our milery and wretched ness, so long as it is so, cannot be expressed. 2. That we can do nothing for ourfelves; fet all our wits a-work, we cannot fall upon a way that will bring us home. 2. That it is madness for us to seek out another way, and to vex ourselves in vain; to run to this and to that mean or invention of our own, and be found fools in end. 4. That our madness is fo much the greater in this, that we will turn to our own ways that will fail us, when there is fuch a noble and excellent and every way fatisfying way prepared to our hand. 5. That our wickedness is so desperate, that the way which is pointed out to us doth not please us, and that we will not enter into it, nor walk in it. 6. That this Way, which is also the Truth and the Life, is only worth the embracing, and is only fafe and fure; we should be convinced and perswaded of the worth, fufficiency and defirableness of this way. Reason, with ordinary light from the word. may teach these things; but grace can only carry them s, to ht in into the heart, and make them take rooting there.

3. We may read here our obligation unto those particulars; 1. To turn our back upon all other falle and deceirful ways, and not reft there. 2. To enter into this way; tho' the gate by narrow and firsit, Mat. 7.

13. Luke 13. 24. yet to frive to enter in. 3. To to-

How Chaift is the Way,

folve to abide in that way, as acquicking it it, refling fatisfied with it; and this is to be rooted in him, Col. 2.

7. and to dwell in him, I John 9. 24. and to live in him or through him, I John 4. 9. 4. To walk in this way, Col. 2. 6. that is, to make conftant use of him, and to make progress in the way in and thro him: to go from strength to strength in him, drawing all our surniture from him by faith, according to the covenant, And this saith, that the soul should guard against, I stepping aside out of this good and pleasant way;

2. backsiding; 2. sitting up and fainting by the way.

In a word, This pointeth out our duty, to make use of Christ as our way to the Father, and only of Christ; and this leads us to the particulars we shall speak a

ittle to.

There are two main things, which fland in our way, and hinder us from approaching to the Father. 1. Unrighteoufness and goilt, whereby we are legally banished, because of the broken covenant, and the righteous sentence of God according to that covenant: and, 2. Wickedness, impurity and unholiness, which is, as a physical bar, lying in our way; because nothing that is unclean can dwell and abide with him who is of purer eyes than he can behold iniquity, and nothing that is unclean can enter in there where he is. So then there must be an use-making of Christ, as a way through both these impediments. We need justification and pardon for the one, and fanctification and cleanfing for the other. Now, Christ being the way to the Father, both as to justification, in taking away the emnity, in changing our flate, and removing our unrighteoufness and guilt, whereby we were lying under the fentence of the law, adjudging fuch finners as we are to hell; and as to tanctification in cleaning us from all our pollutions, renewing our fouls, washing away our spots and defilements, &c. he must be made use of in reference to both.

Inspeaking to the first, we shall be the shorter, because, thro' God's great mercy, the gospel's pure way of justification by faith in Christ is richly and abundantly cleared up by many worthy authors of late, both as concerning the theoretical and practical part.

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## How Chrift is made ufe of for Juftification as a Way.

What Christ hath done to purchase, procure and to bring about our justification before God, is mentioned already, w.c. That he stood in the room of somers, engaging for them as their cautioner, undertaking and at length paying down the ransom; becoming sin, or a facrifice for sin, and a curse for them, and so laying down his life a ransom to satisfy divine justice; and this he hath made known in the gospel, calling sinners to an accepting of him as their only Mediator, and to a resting upon him for life and salvation; and withat working up such as belong to the election of grace, to an actual closing with him upon the conditions of the covenant, and to an accepting of him, believing in him, and resting upon him, as satisfied with, and acquiescing in, that sovereign way of salvation and justification through a crucified Mediator.

Now, for fuch as would make use of Christ as the way to the Father in the point of justification, those things are requisite; so which we shall only premit this word of caution; That we judge not the want of these requisites a ground to exceen any that heareth the gospel from the obligation to believe and rest upon

Christ as he is offered in the gospel.]

a conviction of original guilt, whereby we are banished out of God's presence and favour, and are in a state of comity and death, are come short of the glory of God, Rom. 3. 23. becoming dead, or under the sentence of seath, thro the offence of one, Rom. 5. 15. being made smers by one man's disobedience, v. 19. and therefore under the reigning power of death, v. 17. and under that judgment which came upon all men to condemnation, v. 18. and of original innate wickedness, whereby he heart is filled with enmity against God, and is a nater of him and of all his ways; standing in full opposition to him and to his holy laws; loving to contradict and resist him in all his actings; despiting and undervaluing

How Christ is the Way, dervaluing all his condescentions of love; obstinately refuling his goodness and offers of mercy, and peremptorily perfifting in rebellion and heart-opposition; not only not accepting his kindness and offers of mercy, but contemning them, trampling them under foot, as imbittered against him. As also, there must be a conviction of our actual transgressions, whereby we have corrupted our ways yet more, run further away from God, brought on more wrath upon our fouls, according to that sentence of the law, Curfed is every one that abideth not in all that is written in the law to do it, Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10. What way this conviction is begun and carried on in the foul, and to what a measure it must come, I cannot now fland to explain: only in short know, that upon whatfoever occasion it be begun, whether by a word carried home to the heart by the finger of God, or by some sharp and crossing dispensation, fear of approaching death, some hainous outbreaking, or the like, it is a real thing, a heart-reaching conviction, not general and notional, but particular, plain and pinching, affecting the heart with fear and terror, making the foul feriously and really to mind this matter, to be taken up with the thoughts of it, and anxioully and earneftly to cry out, What fall I do to be faved! and finally will make the foul willing to hearken and hear what hopes of mercy there is in the gospel, and to embrace the way of falvation which is there laid down: And the reason of this is, because Christ himself tells us, The whole needeth not the physician, but the sich Mat. 9. 12. He is not come to call the righteous, that is fuch as are righteous in their own eyes, but finners, that is, fuch as are no more now whole at the heart, as fee ing no evil, no hazard or danger; but pricked and pierced with the sense of their lost condition, being under the heavy wrath and vengeance of the great God because of fin; and seeing their own vileness, cursed ness, wickedness and desperate madness. Because na turally we hate God and Christ, John 15. 23, 24,2 and have a strong natural antipathy at the way of a vation thro' Jefus, therefore nothing but firong and in

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Under this conviction the man is bowed down, and made mute before God; no more boasting of his goodness and of his happy condition; no high or great thoughts of his righteousness, for all are now to be looked on as filtby rags, Isa. 64. 6. What things were as gain before to the soul, must now be counted loss, yea, and as dung, Phil. 3. 7, 8. The man must be cast down in himself, and far from high and conceity thoughts of himself, or of any thing he ever did, or can do: For the Lord resistent the proud, but givet grace to the humble, Jam. 4. 6. I Pet. 5. 5. He revivet the spirit of the humble, Isa. 57. 15. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, Mat. 18. 4. & 23. 12. Luke 14. 11. & 18. 14.

adly, There must be a despairing of getting help of relief out of this condition by ourselves, or any thing we can do; a conviction of the unprofitableness of all; things under the fun for our relief; no expectation of help from our supposed good heart, good purposes, good deeds, works of charity, many prayers, commendation of others, fober and harmless walking, or any thing else within us or without us that is not Christ: For, so long as we have the least hope or expectation of doing our own business without Christ, we will never come to him. Our heart hangeth so after the old way of falvation thro' works, that we cannot endure to hear of any other, nor can we yield to any other. Could we but have heaven by the way of works, we would pare no pains, no cost, no labour, no expences; nay, we would put ourselves to much pain and torment by whippings, cuttings, fastings, watchings, and the like; we would not spare our first-born; nay, we would dig our graves in a rock with our nails, and cut our own ays, could we but get heaven by this means. Such is or antipathy at the way of falvation thro a crucified hrift, that we would choose any way but that, cost hat it would: Therefore, before we can heartily close ith Christ and accept of him, we must be put from

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a disappointment written on them all; that all our prayers, fastings, cries, duties, reformations, sufferings, good wishes, good deeds, & are nothing in his eyes but so many provocations to the eyes of his jealous,

and fo, further causes of our misery.

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4thly, There must be a rational, deliberate and refoluse relinquishing of all those things in ourselves, on which our heart is ready to dote. The man, being convinced of the vanity of all things by which he hath been hoping for falvation, must now purpose to loose his grips off them, to turn his back upon them, to quit them with purpose of heart, and say to them, Get you bence; as Ifa. 30. 22. This is to deny ourselves, which we must do, ere we become his disciples, Mat. 16. 24. This is to forfake our father's house, Pfal, 45. 10. and to pluck out our right eye, and to cut off our right This abandoning of all our forafm, Mat. 5, 29, 30. mer false props and subterfuges must be resolute, over the belly of much opposition within, from the carnal and natural inclinations of the heart; and of much oppolition without, from Satan's infnaring fuggestions and deceitful temptations: it must be a real, rational act of the foul, upon folid and thorow conviction of their unprofitableness, yea, of their dangeroushess and destruchivenefs.

of the gospel-covenant, and of the way which now God hath chosen whereby to glorify his grace in the salvation of poor sinners: That God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, thought good, for the glory of free grace and wisdom, in a way of justice and mercy, to send Jesus Christ to assume man's nature, and so become God and Man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever; and to become under the law, to undergo the curse thereof, and to die the cursed death of the cross, so satisfy justice, and to pay the ransom for the redemption of the elect. In which undertaking our Lord was a servant, ssa. 22.18. and had surniture from God for all his undertaking, ssa. 42.1. & 51.1, 2. Mat. 12.18.

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and had a promife of feeing his feed, and of prolonging his days, &c. Ila. 32. 10, 11. Thus there was a covenant of redemption betwixt God and the Mediator: and the Mediator undertaking, was obliged to perform all that he undertook, and accordingly did to: for as the Lord laid on bim, or called to meet together on him, the iniquity of us all, Ifa. 54. 6. fo in due time be bere our griefs, and carried our forrows: He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chafifement of our peace was upon bim : He was cut off out of the land of the living, and stricken for the transgression of his people: He made bis foul an offering for fin, and bore the iniquities of his people. Pouring out his foul unto death; be bore the fin of many, and made intercession for the transgreffors, Ifa. 53. 4, 5, 10, 11, 12. fo that what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for fin (or by a facrifice for fin) condemned fin in the fleft, Rom. 8. 2. that the righteoufness of the law might be fulfilled in us, v. 4. Thus he made him fin, (or a facrifice for fin) that we might become righteous, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and be was once offered to bear the fins of many, Heb. 9. 28. and be through the eternal Spirit offered himfelf without spot to God, v. 14. and bis own felf bore our fins in bis own body on the tree, I Pet. 2. 24. There must, I fay, be fome knowledge of, and acquaintance with, this great mystery of the gospel, wherein is declared the manifold wisdom of God, Eph. 3. 10. and with the noble defign of God in fending his Son after this manner, to die the death, that condemned finners might live, and return to the bosom of God, as redeemed, not with gold or filver or corruptible things; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, 1 Pet. 1. 18, and, being so redeemed by blood, to become kings and priefts unto God, 1 Pet. 2.2. Rev. 5. 9, 10. The man must not be ignorant of this, else all will be in vain. I do not determine how diffinet and full this knowledge must be; but fure there must be so much knowledge of it, as will give the foul ground of hope, and, in expectation of falvation by this way, cause it TUED

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1. of 8. turn its back upon all other ways, and to account itself

happy if it could once win here. 6thly. There must be a perswasion of the sufficiency, compleatness and satisfactoriness of the way of salvation thro' this crucified Mediator; else the foul will not be induced to leave its other courses, and betake itself to this alone. He must be sure that salvation is only to be had this way, and that undoubtedly it will be had this way; that so with confidence he may cast himself over on this way, and sweetly fing in hope of a noble outgate: And therefore he must believe, that Christ is really God as well as Man, and a true Man as well as God; that he is fully furnished for the work of redemption, having the Spirit given to him without measure, and endued fully and richly with all qualifications fitting him for all our necessities, and enabling him to fave to the uttermost all that come unto God by bim, Heb. 7.25. That he is made of God to us wisdom, righteousness, Santification, 1 Cor. 1. 30. That all power in beaven and earlb is given unto bim, Mat. 28. 18. That all things are put under his feet, and that be is given to be the bead over all things to the church, Eph. 1. 22. That in him develleth all fulness, Col. 1. 19. That in bim are bid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. 2. 3. yea, That in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead hodily: so that we are compleat in bim, who is the head of all principality and power, v. 9, 10.

able and all-sufficient Mediator, but that also he is willing and ready to redeem and save all that will come: for all the preceeding particulars will but increase his sorrow, and torment him more, so long as he supposet thro ignorance, and the suggestion of satan, that he hath no part in that redemption, no access to it, no ground of hope of salvation by it. Therefore it is necessary, that the soul conceive, not only a possibility, but also a probability of help this way; and that the dispensation of the gospel of grace, and the promulgation and offer of those good news to him, speak out so much; that the patience of God waiting long, and his goodness renewing the colors, confirmeth this; that his

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ferious pressing, his strong motives on the one hand, and his sharp threatnings on the other, his reiterated commands, his ingeminated obtestations, his expressed forrow and grief over such as would not come to him, his upbraidings and objurgations of such as do obstinately resuse, and the like, put his willingness to save such as will come to him out of all question: yea, his obviating of objections, and taking all excuses out of their mouth, maketh the case plain and manifest; so that such as will not come, are lest without excuse, and have no impediment lying in the way bur their own

unwillingness.

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8thly, The man must know upon what terms and conditions Christ offereth himself in the gospel, viz. upon condition of accepting of him, believing in him, and reffing upon him; and that no other way can we be made partakers of the good things purchased by Christ, but by accepting of him as he is offered in the gospel, that is to fay, freely, without price or money, Ifa. 55. I. absolutely, without reservation; wholly, and for all ends, &c. for, till this be known, there will be no clofing with Christ; and, till there be a closing with Christ, there is no advantage to be had by him. Toul must be married to him as an busband; fixed to him, as the branches to the tree; united to him, as the members to the head; become one with him, one spirit, 1 Cor. 6.17. See John 15. 5. Eph. 5. 30. The foul must close with him for all things, adhere to him upon all hazards, take him and the sharpest cross that followeth him: now, I say, the soul must be acquainted with these conditions; for it must act deliberately and rationally here. Covenanting with Christ is a grave bufiness, and requireth deliberation, posedness of soul, rational resolution, full purpose of heart, and satisfaction of foul; and therefore the man must be acquainted with the conditions of the new covenant.

9thly, There must be a satisfaction with the terms of the gospel, and the heart must actually close with Christ as he is offered in the gospel. The heart must open to him, and take him in, Rev. 3. 20. The soul must embrace and receive him, John 1. 12. The man must take

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him as his Lord and Mafter, King, Priest and Prophet; must give up himself to him as his Leader and Commander, and resolve to follow him in all things, and thus close a bargain with him: for, till this be done, there is no union with Christ; and, till there be an union with Christ, there is no partaking of the fruits of his redemption, as to justification; no pardon, no acceptance, no access to the favour of God, nor peace; nor joy in the Holy Ghost; no getting of the conscience sprinkled, nor no intimation of love or favour from God, De.

10thly, There must be a leaning to and refting upon him and on his perfect facrifice. The foul must fit down here as fatisfied, and acquielce in this compleat mediation of his. This is to believe on him, to reft on bim, John 3. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 6. as an all-fufficient help. This is to cast the burden of a broken covenant, of a guilty conscience, of deserved wrath, of the curse of the law, &c. upon him, that he may bear away those evils from us: This is to put on the Lord Jefus (in part) Rom. 12. 14. to cover ourselves with his righteousness from the face of justice, to stand in this armour of proof against the accusations of law, Satan, and an evil conscience: This is to flee to him as to our city of refuge, that we may be fafe from the avenger of blood: This is to make him our refuge from the florm of God's anger, and a shadow from the heat of his wrath, Isa. 25. 4. and our biding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempes, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, Ifa. 32. 2. when we hide ourselves in him as the compleat cautioner that hath fully fatisfied juffice, and defire to be found in him alone, not baving our own righteoufness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3. 9. This is to lay our hand on the head of the facrifice, when we reft on this facrifice, and expect falvation thro'it alone: This is to cast ourselves in Christ's arms, as peremptorily resolving to go no other way to the Father, and to plead no other righteousness before God's bar but Christ's. That is faith, yea, the lively acting of justifying faith.

Thus then is Christ made use of, as the way to the

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Father, in the point of justification, when the poor wakned sinner, convinced of his sin and misery, of his own inability to help himself, of the insufficiency of all means helide Christ; of Christ's all-sufficiency, readiness and willingness to help; of the equity and reasonable-ness of the conditions on which he is offered, and life thro' him; is now content and fully satisfied with this way, actually renouncing all other ways whatsomever; and doth with heart and hand embrace Jesus Christ, and take him as he is offered in the gospel, to make use of him for all things, to lean to him, and rest upon him in all hazards; and particularly to resuge itself under his wings, and to rest there with complacency, satisfaction and delight; and hide itself from the wrath of God, and all accusations.

Yet it would be known, that this act of faith, whereby the foul goeth out to Christ, and accepteth of and

leaneth to him, is not alike in all: for,

1. In tome it may be more lively, firing and active, like the centurion's faith, that could argue fyllogiffically, Mat. 8. 8, Se. which Christ looked upon as a great faith, a greater whereof he had not found, no not in Israel, v. 10. and like the faith of the woman of Ganaam, Mat. 15. 21, Se. that would take no naysay, but of seeming refusals did make arguments, which Christ commended as a great faith, v. 28. But in others it may be more weak and fainting, not able to reason aright for its own comfort and strength, as Mat. 6. 30. but is mixed with much sear, as Mat 8. 26. yea, and with much faithlesses, so that the soul must cry, Lord below my unbelief, Mark 9. 24.

2. In some the acts and actings of this faith may be more clear and discernible, both by themselves, and by spiritual on-lookers; in others so covered over with an heap of doubts, unbelief, jealously, and other corruption, that the actings of it can hardly, or not at all, be perceived by themselves or others, so that nothing shall be heard but complaints, scars, doubtings, and

objections.

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3. In some this faith may have strong and perceptible actings, wrestling thorow much discouragement and opposition,

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polition; and many difficulties; as in that woman of Ganaan, Mat. 15. running thorow with peremptory restricteness; faying with Job, chap. 13. 15. Though be flay me, yet will I trust in him; and thus taking the kingdom of heaven with violence. In others it may be so weak, that the least opposition or discouragement may be sufficient to make the soul give over hope, and almost despair of overcoming and winning thorow; and be as a bruised reed, or a smoking flax.

4. In some, the itappear not strong, and violent or wilful (in a manner) in its actings; yet it may be firm, fixed and resolute, in staying upon him, 1sa. 26.3, 4. and trusting in him, Psal. 125. 1. resolving to hang there, and, if it perish, it perisheth: In others weak

and bashful.

5. In some it may be yet weaker, going out in strong and vehement hungrings, Mat. 5. 6. The man dare not say that he doth believe, or that he doth adhere to Christ, and stay upon him; yet he dare say, he longeth for him, and panteth after him, as ever the bart doth after the water-brooks, Psal. 42. 1, 2. he hungreth and thirsteth for him, and cannot be satisfied with any thing without him.

6. In some it may be that weak, that the soul can only perceive the heart looking out after him, upon little more ground than a may-be it shall be helped, Isa. 45. 22. They look to him for salvation, being convinced that there is no other way, and resolved to follow no other way; they resolve to ly at his door, waiting and looking for a sight of the King's face, and to ly there waiting till they die, if no better may be.

7. In some it may be so weak, that nothing more can be perceived but a satisfaction with the terms of the covenant, a willingness to accept of the bargain, and an heart consenting thereunto, the they dare not say that they actually close therewith, yea, nor dare

fay that they shall be welcome, Rev. 22. 17.

8. In some it may be so weak and low, that they cannot say that they have any right hunger or desire after him, nor that their heart doth rightly and really consent to the covenant of grace; yet they would sain be at it, and

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and cry out, Oh for a willing heart! O for ardent defires! O for a right hunger! and they are diffarished, and cannot be reconciled with their hearts, for not defiring more, hungring more; confending more; so that, if they had this, they would think themselves happy and up-made. And thus we see their faith is so low; that it appeareth in nothing more manifestly than in their complainings of the want of it.

So then, the poor weak believer needeth not be for far discouraged, as to despair and give over the matter as hopeless and lost: let him hang on, depend and wait; a weak faith to-day may become stronger within a short time. He that laid the foundation, can and will finish the building; for all his works are perfect. And a weak faith, when true, will prove saving, and lay hold

on a faving ftrong Mediator.

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Moreover, as to the acting of faith on Christ's death and facrifice, for stopping the mouth of conscience, law, Satan, and for opposing to the pursuing justice of God because of sin: it may sometimes be strong, distinct, clear and resolute; at other times again be weak; mixed, or accompanied with much sear; perplexity, doubting and distrust, because of their own seen unworthiness, many failings, doubtings of the sincerity of their repentance, and the like.

This is a main bufiness, and of great concernment; yet many are not much troubled about it, nor exercised at the heart hereabout, as they ought, deceiving them-

selves with foolish imaginations: for,

they never doubted of God's grace and good-will; they had always a good heart for God, tho they never knew what a wakened conscience, or sense of the wrath of God, meaned.

2. Or they think, because God is merciful, he will not be so severe, as to stand upon all those things that ministers require; forgetting that he is a just God, and a God of truth, that will do according to what he hath

3. Or they suppose it is an easy matter to believe, and not such a difficult thing as it is called: not considering

or believing, that no less power, than that which relied Christ again from the dead, will work up the treat not to faith.

fome more convenient featon: not perceiving the cunning fleight of Satar in this, nor confidering that faith is not in their power, but the gift of God; and that if they lay not hold on the call of God, but harden their leart in their day, God may judicially blind them, to that these things shall be hid from their eyes; and so that occasion, they pretend to wait for, never come.

Oh if fuch, whom this mainly concerneth, could be

induced to enter into this way! confidering,

(1,) That, except they enter into this way, they cannot be fafe, the wrath of God will purfue them, the avenger of blood will overtake them: no falvation but bere.

(a,) That in this way is certain falvation: this way will infallibly lead to the Father; for he accepth in the way, and bringeth fafe home. Ened. 23. 20.

(3.) Tis the old path, and the good way, Jer. 6. 16. all the faints have the experience of this, who are al-

ready come to glery. And,

(4.) It is a high-way, and a way of righteousness, wherein if very fools walk, they shall not wander, Is, 35. 8, 9. and, if the weak walk in it, they shall not faint, Is. 40. 21.

(5.) That, except this be done, there is no advantage to be had by him. His death and all his fufferings, as to those persons that will not believe and enter into him

as the way to the Father, are in vain.

cither that Christ hath not died nor consecrated a way thro' the vail of his flesh: or that all that he hath done and suffered is not sufficient for bringing a soul home to God: or that they can do their own business without him, and that it was a soolish and vain thing for Christ to die the death for that end: or, lastly, that they can not for salvation; they are indifferent whether they perish, or be faved.

(7.) That, as to them, the whole gospel is in vain, all

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a, call own : he ordinances, all the administration of ordinances; all

he pains of ministers are in vain,

(8.) That, as to them, all Christ's intreaties, motives, llurements, patience and long-fusfering, his standing as he door and knocking, till his locks be wet with the lew, Se are in vain: yea, they are contemptuously ejected, despised, slighted, and undervalued.

(9.) That all the great promises are by such rejected suntrue, or as not worth the seeking or having; and hat all the threatnings, on the other hand, are not to

e regarded or feared,

(10.) In a word, That heaven, and the fellowship of sod, is not worth the feeking; and that hell, and the ellowship of devils, is not worth the fearing. Or, that here is neither a heaven, nor a hell: and that all are ut fictions: and that there is no such thing as the wrath f God against finners, or that it is not much to be sared.

If it be asked, What warrant have poor finners to y hold on Christ, and grip to him, as made of God

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I answer, T. Our absolute necessity of him is a ground press us to go and seek help and relief: we see we re gone in ourselves, and therefore are we allowed to the out for help elsewhere.

2. Christ's all-sufficient furniture, whereby he is a valified Mediator, fitted with all necessaries for our see and condition, having laid down a price to the fataction of justice, is a sufficient invitation for us to took toward him for help, and to wait at that door.

3. His being appointed of the Father to be Mediator the covenant, and particularly to lay down his life a mon for fin; and Christ's undertaking all his offices, in determining all the duties thereof, conform to the wenant of redemption, is a strong encouragement to finners to come to him; because he cannot deny miles, and he will be true to his trust.

4. The Father's offering of him to us in the gospel, d Christ's inviting us who are weary and heavy loaden, a, calling and commanding such to come to him, in sown and in his Father's name, under the pain of his

and

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and his Father's wrath and everlasting displeasure; exhorting further and requesting upon terms of love, pressing earnestly by many motives, sending out his ambassadors to be seech, in his stead, poor sinners to be reconciled, and to turn in to him for life and salvation; yea, upbraiding such as will not come to him: all these are a sufficient warrant for a poor necessitous sinner to lay hold on his offer.

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And further, to encourage poor fouls to come unto him, all things are so well ordered in the gospel, as that nothing occurreth, that can in the least prove a flumbling-block, or a just ground of excuse for their forbearing to believe, and to accept of his offer; all objections possible are obviated to such as are but willing: the way is cast up, and all stones of stumbling cast out of it; so that such as will not come can pretend no excuse. They cannot object the greatness of their fins; for, the greater their fins be, they have the greater need of one who is fent to take away fin, and whose blood purgeth from all fins, I John 1. 7. What great finner did he ever refuse, that came to him, and was willing to be faved by him? Is there any clause in all the gospel excluding great sinners? Nor need they object their great unworthines; for he doth all freely, for the glory of his free grace: never got any good of him for their worth; for no man ever had any worth. Nor need they object their long refusing, and refisting many calls for he will make fuch as are willing welcome at the eleventh hour. Him that cometh he will in no case pu away, John 6. 37. Nor can they object their change ableness, that they will not fland to the bargain, but break and return with the dog to the vomit; for Chris hath engaged to bring all thorow that come to him. He will raise them up at the last day, John 6. 40. He wil present them to himself boly, and without spot or wrinkle or any fuch thing, Eph. 5. The covenant is fully pro vided with promises to stop the mouth of that objection Nor can they object the difficulty or impossibility believing; for that is Christ's work also: He is the an thor and finisher of faith, Heb. 12. 1. Can they not wit confidence cast themselves upon him; yet if they ca hung

hunger and thirst for him, and look to him, he will accept of that: Look to me (says he) and be saved, Isa, 45. 22. If they cannot look to him, nor hunger and thirst for him; yet, if they be willing, all is well. Are they willing that Christ save them in his way, and therefore willingly give themselves over to him, and are willing and content that Christ by his Spirit work more hunger in them, and a more lively faith, and work both to will and to do according to his own good pleasure? it is well.

But it will be said, That the terms and conditions on which he offereth himself are hard. Ans. I grant the terms are hard to flesh and blood, and to proud unmortised nature; but to such as are willing to be saved, so as God may be most glorified, the terms are easy, most

rational and fatisfying: for,

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tor, and to join none with him, and to mix nothing with him. Corrupt nature is averse from this, and would at least mix something of self with him, and not rest on Christ only: corrupt nature would not have the man wholly denying himself, and following Christ only; and hence many lose themselves and lose all, because, with the Galatians, they would mix the law and the gospel together, do something themselves for satisfaction of justice, and take Christ for the rest that remains. Now, the Lord will have all the glory, as good reason is, and will have none to share with him: He will give of his glory to none. And is not this rational and easy? What

can be objected against this?
2. We are required to take him wholly, that he may

be a compleat Mediator to us, as a Prophet to teach, as a King to subdue our lusts, to cause us walk in his ways, as well as a Priest to satisfy justice for us, to die and interceed for us. Is it not reason that we take him as God hath made him for us? Is there any thing in him, thich we have no need of? Is there not all the reason ten in the world for this, that we take him wholly?

3. We are required to take him freely, without money

money and without price, I/a. 55. 1; for he will not be bought any manner of way: that free grace may be free grace, therefore he will give all freely. True enough it is, corruption would be at huying, the it have nothing to lay out: pride will not from to a free gift. But can any fay the terms are hard, when all is

offered freely? 4. We are required to take him absolutely, without any revertion or mental refervation. Some would wilfingly quit all, but one or two lufts, that they cannot think to twin with; and they would deny themselves in many things, but they would fill most willingly keep a back-door open to fome beloved luft or other. And who feeth nor what double-dealing is here? and what reason can plead for this double-dealing? Corruption, it is true, will think this hard; but no man can rationally fay, that this is a just ground of discouragement to any, or a fufficient ground to warrant them to stay away from Christ, seeing they cannot be supposed sincerely to defire redemption from any fin, who would not defire redemption from every fin. He who loveth any known luft, and would not willingly be delivered therefrom, hath no real hatred at any lust as fuch, nor defire to be faved; for one fuch luft would

5. It is required that we accept of him really and cordially with our heart and foul, and not by a mere external verbal profession. And is there not all the reason in the world for this? he offereth himself really to us, and shall we not be real in accepting of him? What, I pray, can justly be excepted against this; or what real discouragement can any gather from this?

be his death.

6. We are to take him for all necessities, that is, with a resolution to make use of him as our all-sufficient Mediator. And is not this most reasonable? ought we not to take him for all the ends and purposes for which God hath appointed him, and set him forth, and offered him to us? What then can any suppose to by here, which should scar a soul from laying hold upon him? nay, should not this be looked upon as a very great encouragement? and should we not bless the Lord,

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Lord, that hath provided fuch a compleat and all-fufficient Mediator?

7. We are to take him, and all the croffes that may artend our taking or following of him: we must take up our crofs, be it what it will be, that he thinkerh good to appoint for us, and follow bim, Mat. 16. 24, Mark 8. 34. for be that taketh not up his crofs, and followeth not after bim, is not worthy of bim, Mat. 10. 38. I know, fieth and blood will take this for a hard faying; but they that confider that Christ will bear the heaviest end of the cross, yea all of it, and so support them by his Spirit while they are under it, that they shall have no just cause to complain; and how he will suffer none to go his errand upon their own charges, but will be with them when they go through fire and water, Ifa. 43. 2. fo that they shall suffer no loss, neither shall the waters overflow them, nor the fire kindle upon them; and that he who loseth his life for Christ's sake, and the gospel's, shall save it, Mark 8. 35. yea, that they Shall receive an bundred-fold for all their loffer, Mat. 19. 29. and that even with perfecution, Mark 10. 30, and in the world to come eternal life: they, I fay, who come fider this, will fee no discouragement here, nor ground of complaint; nay, they will account it their glory to

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S. Hence it followeth, that we are to take him, so as to avouch him, and his cause and interest, on all hazards, stand to his truth, and not be assumed of him in a day of trial. Confession of him must be made with the mouth, as with the heart we must believe, Rom. 10.

Let corruption speak against this what it will, bequise it is always desirous to keep the skin whole; yet
reason cannot but say that it is equitable, especially
steing he hath said, that whosever confessed him
sessed, be will confess them before his Father which
in heaven, Mat. 10. 32. and that, if we suffer with
him, we shall also reign with him, a Tim. 2. 12. Is he
har Lord and Master, and should we not own and a-

ur Lord and Mafter, and should we not own and aouch him? should we be ashamed of him for any hing that can befal us upon that account? what master ould not take that ill at his servants hands?

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Hence

100 How Christ is the Way

Hence then we see, that there is nothing in all the conditions on which he offereth himself to us, that can give the least ground in reason why a poor soul should draw back, and be unwilling to accept of this noble of-

fer, or think that the conditions are hard.

But there is one main objection, which may trouble some, and that is; They cannot believe: faith being the gift of God, it must be wrought in them; how then can they go to God for this, and make use of Christ for this end, that their souls may be wrought up to a believing and consenting to the bargain, and hearty accepting of the offer?

To this I would fay these things;

1. It is true, that faith is the gift of God, Eph. 2. 8. and that it is he alone who worketh in us both to will and to do, Phil. 1. 29. and none cometh to the Son, but whom the Father draweth, John 6. 44. And it is a great matter, and no small advancement, to win to the real faith, and thorow conviction of this our impotency; for thereby the soul will be brought to a great measure of humiliation, and of despairing of salvation in itself, which is no small advantage unto a poor soul that would be saved.

2. The faith be not in our power, yet it is our duty. Our impotency to perform our duty, doth not loose our obligation to the duty; so that our not believing is our sin, and for this God may justly condemn us: his wrath abideth on all who believe not in his Son Jesus, and will not accept of the offer of salvation through the crucified Mediator. And the faith, as all other acts of grace, be efficiently the work of the Spirit, yet it is formally our work: we do believe; but it is

the Spirit that worketh faith in us.

3. The ordinary way of the Spirit's working faith in us, is by preffing home the duty upon us, whereby we are brought to a despairing in ourselves, and to a looking out to him, whose grace alone it is that can work it in the soul, for that necessary help and breathing, without which the soul will not come.

4. Christ Jesus hath purchased this grace of faith to all the elect, as other graces necessary to their sale

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vation: and it is promised and covenanted to him, that He shall see his seed, and shall see of the travail of his soul, Isa. 53. 10, 11. and that by the knowledge of him, that is, the rational and understanding act of the soul gripping to and laying hold upon him as he is offered in the gospel, many shall be justified: I bid. Hence he saith, that all whom the Father bath given to him, shall come unto him, John 6. 37. and the apostle tells us, that we are blessed with all spiritual hessings in him, Eph. 1.3.

5. Not only hath Christ purchased this grace of faith, and all other graces necessary for the salvation of the elect; but God hath committed to him the administration and actual dispensarion and out-giving of all those graces which the redeemed stand in need of. Hence be is a Prince exasted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, Acts 5. 31. All power in beaven and earth is committed unto him, Mat. 28. 18, 19. Hence he is called the author and sinisper of faith, Heb. 12. 2, and he telleth his disciples, John 14. 13, 14. that whatever they shall ask in his name, he will do it. He is made Prince and Saviour, having all judgment committed unto him, John 5. 22. and he is Lord of all, Acts 10.

36. Rom. 14. 9.

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ith al6. Hereupon, the finner being convinced of his loft condition thro fin and misery, of an utter impossibiliy of helping himself out of that state of death, of thrift's all-fufficiency and willingness to fave all that vill come to him, and of its own inability to believe come to him for life and falvation, or to lay hold on nd lean to his merits and fatisfaction, and so despairng in himself, is to look out to Jesus the author of ternal falvation, the foundation and chief cornerone, the author and finisher of faith; I say, the siner, being thus convinced, is thus to look out to Jefus; ot that that conviction is any proper qualification, prequifite as necessary, either to prepare, dispose and fit for ith, or far less to merit any manner of way, or bring on ith; but because this is Christ's method to bring a ul to faith by this conviction, to the glory of his ace. The foul naturally being averse from Christ, dutterly unwilling to accept of that way of falvation,

must be redacted to that strait, that it shall see that it must either accept of this offer, or die. As the whole needeth not a physician, so Christ is come to save only that which is lost; and his method is to convince the world of fin in the first place, and then of righteous.

nefs, John 16.8, 9.

7. This looking out to Jefus for faith, comprehendeth those things; (1.) The foul's acknowledgment of the necessity of faith, to the end it may partake of Christ, and of his merits. (2.) The foul's fatisfaction with that way of partaking of Christ, by a closing with him, and a reffing upon him by faith. (3.) A fente and conviction of the unbelief and frubbornness of the heart; or a seeing of its own impotency, yea, and unwillingness to believe. (4.) A perswation that Christ can over-mafter the infidelity and wickedness of the heart, and work up the foul to a willing confeat unto the bargain, 5. A hope, or a half-hope (to speak fo) that Christ, who is willing to save all poor sinners that come to him for falvation, and hath faid that he will put none away in any cafe that cometh, will have pit upon him at length. (6.) A resolution to ly at his door, till he come with life, till he quicken, till he unite the foul to himself. (7.) A lying open to the breathings of his Spirit, by guarding against every thing (fo far as they can) that may grieve or provoke him, and waiting on him in all the ordinances he had appointed for begetting of faith; such as reading the scriptures, hearing the word, conference with gods persons, and prayer, &c. (8.) A warting with pati ence on him, who never faid to the boufe of Jacob Seek me in vain, Ifa. 45. 19. ftill crying and looking to him, who hath commanded the ends of the earth look to him; and waiting for him, who waiteth to b gracious, Ifa. 30. 18. remembring that they are all ble led that wait for him, Ibid. and that there is much good prepared for them that wait for him, Ifa. 64. 4.

8. The finner would effay this believing, and clo fing with Christ, and set about it, as he can, ferfoully heartily and willingly; yea, and resolutely over the belly of much opposition, and many discouragement

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looking to him who must help, yes, and work the whole work: for God worketh in and with man, as a rational creature. The foul then would let the willingness it findeth on work, and wait for more; and, as the Lord is pleased to commend by his Spirit the way of grace more unto the soul, and to warm the heart with love to it, and a defire after it, strike the iron while it is hot; and, looking to him for help, grip to Christ in the covenant, and so fet to its seal, the with a trembling hand, and subscribe its name, the with sear and much doubting, remembring that he who worketh to will, must work the deed also, Phil. 2. 13, and he that beginneth a good work will perfect it, Phil. 1. 6.

o. The foul effaying thus to believe in Christ's strength, and to creep when it cannot walk or run, would hold fast what it hath attained, and resolve never to recal any consent or half-consent it hath given to the bargain, but still look foreward, hold on, wrestle against unbelief and unwillingness; entertain every good motion of the Spirit for this end, and never admit of any thing that may quench its longings, defires or expectation.

10. Nay, if the finner be come this length, that, with the bit willingness he hath, he consenteth to the bargain, and is not fatisfied with any thing in himfelf that draweth back or confenterh not, and, with the little skill or strength he hath, is writing down his name, and faying, Even fo I take him; and is holding at this, peremptorily refolving never to go back, or unlay what he hath faid; but, on the contrary, is firmly purpoted. to adhere, and, as he groweth in strength, to grip more firmly, and adhere to him, he may conclude that the bargain is closed already, and that he hath faith already; for here there is an accepting of Christ on his own terms, a real confenting unto the covenant of grace, tho weak, and not to differnible as the foul would with, The foul dare not fay but it loveth the bargain, and is fatisfied with it, and longeth for it, and defireth nothing more than that it might partake thereof, and enby him whom it loveth; hungreth for, panteth after, or breatheth, as it is able, that it may live in him, and be laved thro him.

But

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But some will say, It I had any evidence of God's approbation of this act of my soul, any testimony of his Spirit, I could then with confidence say that I had believed and accepted of the covenant, and of Christ offered therein: but, so long as I perceive nothing of this, how can I suppose that any motion of this kind in my soul is real faith?

For answer, 1. We would know, that our believing, and God's sealing to our sense, are two distinct acts, and separable, and oft separated: our believing is one thing, and God's sealing with the holy Spirit of promise to our sense, is another thing; and this followeth, the not inseparably, the other, Epb. 1, 1, 13.—In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that boly

and to events which it exenous

Spirit of promise.

And so, 2. We would know, that many a man may believe, and yet not know that he doth believe: he may fet to his feal, that God is true, in his offer of life thro' Jesus, and accept of that offer as a truth, and close with it; and yet live under darkness and doubrings of his faith long and many a day: parrly thro' not difcerning the true nature of faith; partly thro' the great Tense and feeling of his own corruption and unbelief; partly thro a mistake of the operations of the Spirit within, or the want of a clear and diffinet uptaking of the motions of his own foul; partly because he findeth To much doubting and fear, as if there could be no faith where there were doubting or fear, contrary to Mark 9. 24. Mat. 8. 26. & 14 21. partly because he hath not that perswasion that others have had, as if there were not various degrees of faith, as there is of other graces, and the like.

Therefore, 3. We would know, that many may really believe, and yet miss this sensible sealing of the Spirit which they would be at: God may think it not yet seasonable to grant them that, less they forget themselves, and become too proud; and to train them up more to the life of faith, whereby he may be glorified; and; for other holy ends, he may suspend the giving of

this for a time.

4. Yet we would know, that all that believe have the

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in Sanctification, in general.

105 feal within them, I John 5. 10. He that believeth on the Son of God, bath the witness in bimfelf, that is, he hath that which really is a feal, tho he fee it not, nor perceive it not; even the work of God's Spirit in his foul, inclining and determining him unto the accepting of this bargain, and to a liking of and endeavouring after holiness; and the whole Golpel, clearing up what faith is, is a feal and confirmation of the buliness. So that the matter is scaled and confirmed by the word, the the foul want those sensible breathings of the Spirit, shedding abroad his love in the heart, and filling the foul with a full affurance, by hushing all doubts and fears to the door; yea, tho they should be a stranger unto the Spirit's witnessing thus with their spirits, that they are the children of God, and clearing up diffinctly the real work of grace within their foul. and so faying in effect, that they have in truth believed.

But enough of this, feeing all this and much more is abundantly held forth and explained, in that excellent and useful treatise of Mr. Gutbrie's, intituled, The

Christian's great Interest.

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## CHAP. V.

on one best bash How Christ is to be made use of, as the Way, for Santtification in general.

Aving shown how a poor foul, lying under the burden of fin and wrath, is to make use of Jelus Christ for righteousness and justification, and so to make use of him, go out to him, and apply him, as he s made of God to us righteousness, 1 Cor. 1. 30, and hat but briefly; this whole great buliness being more ully and fatisfactorily handled in that fore-mentioned reat (tho fmall) treatife, viz. The Christian's great Inreft: We shall now come and show how a believer or juffified foul thall further make use of Christ for farfication, this being a particular about which they are tentimes much exercised and perplexed.

That we may therefore in some weak measure, thro'

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the help of his light and grace, propose some things to clear up this great and necessary cruth, we shall first speak a little to it in the general, and then come to clear

up the matter more particularly.

Before we speak of the matter in general, it would be remembred, first, That the person who only is in tale to make use of Christ for fandification, is one that hath made use of him already for righteoufues and judiffication: for one who is a stranger to Christ, and is living in nature, hath no access to Christ for sanctification. He must be a believer, and within the covenant, ere he can make use of the grounds of fanctification laid down in the covenant. One must first be united to Christ, and justified by faith in him, before he can draw any vertue from him for perfecting holines; he must first be in him, before he can grow up in him, or bring forth fruit in him. And therefore the first thing that fouls would go about, should be to get an union made up with Chrift, and be clothed with his righteoutness by faith; and then they have a right to all his benefits: first they should labour to get their state changed from enmity, to peace and reconciliation with God, thro faith in Jefus. Yet, next, it would be observed. That when it is

faid that one must be a believer, before he can go to Christ, and make use of him for holiness and fanctification; it is not so understood, or said, that one must know that indeed he is justified by faith, before he can make any use of Christ for sanctification. One may be justified, and a believer, yea, and growing in grace throughts Christ, and so actually improving the grounds of sanctification, and making use of Christ for this end, and allowed thereunto, and yet win to no certainty of his union with Christ, of his justification thro faith in him

nor of his faith.

But, rbirdly, If it be faid, How can a foul with confidence approach to Christ, for use-making of him is reference to fanctification, that is still doubting of his state and regeneration? I answer, It is true, a clear sign of our interest in Christ by faith, would be a great of couragement to our consident approaching to and the making

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in Sattification, in general. making of bim in all things; and this confiders should move all to a more earnest fearch and study of the marks and evidences of their interest; a good help whereunto they will find in the fore-mentioned book. I shall only say this here, That if the foul have an earnest defire to be sanctified wholly, and to have on the image of God, that he may glorify him; and panteth after holinels, as for life, that he may look like him, who is holy; and maketh this his work and fludy; forrowing at nothing more than at his shortcoming; trying out and longing for the day when he shall be dele vered from a body of death, and have the old man wholly crucified; he needeth not queffion his interest in Chri and warrant to make use of him forevery part of fanchiscation: for this longing defire after conformity to God's law, and panting after this spiritual life, to the end God may be exalted, Christ glorified, and others edified, will not be readily found in one that is yet in nature. It is true, I grant, some who defign to establish their own righteoulness, and to be justified by their own works and inherent holiness, may wish that they might be more holy, and less guilty; and, for some other corrupt ends, they may defire to be free of the power of fome luft, which they find noxious and troubleforn; and yet retain with love and defire fome other beloved lufts, and so have a heart still cleaving to the heart of fome deteffable thing or other : but gracious fouls, as they have respect to all the commands of God, to they have not that defign of being justified before God by their works, nor do they study mortification and fanctification for any fuch end; nay, they no fooner difcover any bias of their falle deceiffel hearts unto any such end, but as soon they disown it, and abhor it. So that hance believers may get fome discovery of the reality of their faith and interest in Christ, and of their warrant, yea, and duty to make use of Christ for fandification,

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This premised, we come to speak something in the general of believers use-making of Christ, as made of God to us sandissination: and, for this end, we shall only speak a little to two things; First, We shall show

upon

How Christ is made use of, upon what account it is, that Christ is called our fantlification, or made of God to us fandification, as the apoftle's phrase is, I Cor. 12. 30. or what Christ hath done, as Mediator, to begin and carry on to perfection the work of fanctification in the foul. And, fecondly, How the foul is to demean itself in this matter, or how the soul is to make use of and improve what Christ hath done, for this end, that it may grow in grace, and perfect holiness in the fear of God. elishem beh

- As to the firft, We would know, that the the work of fanctification be formally ours, yet it is wrought by another hand as the principal efficient cause, even by the Father, Son and Holy Ghoft. The Father is faid to purge the branches, that they may bring forth more fruit, John 15. 1, 2, hence we are faid to be fanctified by God the Father, Jude ver. I. The Son is also called the fanctifier, Heb. 2. 21. he fanctifieth and cleanfeth the church, with the washing of water by the word, Eph. 5. 26. The Spirit is also said to sanctify, 2 Theff. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Rom. 15. 16. Hence we are faid to be washed and sanctified by the Spirit of God, I Cor. 6. 11.

But, more particularly, we are said to be fantified in Chrift, I Cor. 1. 2. and he is made of God to us fanctification, I Cor. 1. 20. Let us then fee in what fense

this may be true: and,

He hath by his death and blood procured, that this work of fanctification shall be wrought and carried on; for he suffered without the gate, that he might fanstify the people with his own blood, Heb. 13. 12. We are faved by the avasting of regeneration, and reneaving of the Hely Ghoft, which be feed on us abundantly, through Jesus Chrift our Saviour, Tit. 2. 5, 6. He gave bimfelf for ui, that be might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto bimfelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. Thus our fanctification is the fruit of his death, and purchased by his blood: He gave bimself for his church, that be might fanctify it, Eph. 5. 25, 26.

2. He dying as a cautioner and publick person, believers are accounted in law to be dead to fin, in him Hence the apostle tells us, Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5, 6. that 4 man

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many of us as are baptifed into Jefus Chrift, were baptifed into bis death; and that therefore we are buried with bim by baptifm into death; and are planted together in the likeness of bis death : yea, and that our old man is crucified with bim, that the body of fin might be deftroyed, that benceforth we fould not ferve fin. Whence believers are warranted and commanded, v. 11. to reckon themselves to be dead indeed unto fin : and therefore fin should. not reign in their mortal bodies, to fulfil the lufts thereof. 0, 12. This is a fure ground of hope and comfort for believers, that Christ died thus, as a publick person: and that by vertue thereof, being now united to Chrift by faith, they are dead unto fin by law; and fin cannot challenge a dominion over them, as before their converfion it might have done, and did: for the law bath dominion over a man as long as be liveth, but no longer. Wherefore believing brethren, becoming dead to the law by the body of Chrift, are married to another, even to bim who is raised from the dead, that they bould bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. 7. 1, 4.

3. Hence it followeth, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of fin might be destroyed, Rom.

So that this old tyrant, that oppreffeth the people of God, hath got his death's wounds in the crucifixion of Christ, and shall never recover his former vigour and activity, to oppress and bear down the people of God, as he did; he is now virtually, thro' the death of Jefus, killed and crucified, being in Christ nailed to the crofs.

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4. His refurrection is a pawn and pledge of this anctification: for as he died as a publick person, fo he rose again as a publick person: We are buried with im by baptism, that like as Christ was raised up from the lead by the glory of the Father, even fo we also fould walk in neguness of life, Rom. 6. 4. And believers are aid to be planted together with bim in the likeness of his furrection, v. s. and they shall live with bim, v. 8. and berefore they are to reckon themselves alive unto God, brough Fefus Chrift our Lord, v. 11. We are raised up tother, Eph. 2. 6.

This fanctification is an article of the covenant

of redesiption herwixt the Rather and the Son, Ma. 42.

19. So hall be sprinkle many nations. Chap. 32. 10. He sail for his food, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his bond. Christ then, having this promised to him, must see to the accomplishment thereof, and will have it granted to him; seeing he hath suffilled all that was engaged to by him, having made his soul an offering for the.

G. This sanchification is promised in the covenant of grace, Jen. 33. 8. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity. Exck. 37. 23. And I will cleanse them. So, Chap. 36. 23. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthings and from all your idols will I cleanse you. Now, all the promises of the covenant of grace are confirmed to us in the Mediator: for in him all the promises are yea and amen, 2 Cor. 1, 20.

7. He hath also purchased and made sure to his own, the new nature, and the heart of flesh, which is also promised, Ezek. 36. 26. & 11. 19. Her. 32. 39. This is the new and lively principle of grace, the spring of sandrification, which cannot be idle in the soul, but

must be emitting vital acts natively.

Yes, thro' him are believers made partakers of the divine nature, which is a growing thing, young glory in the foul, 2 Pet. 2. 3, 4. According as his divine power bath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that bath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be pretakers of the divine nature, &cc.

8. The Spirit is promifed to cause us walk in his saturday, Ezek. 36. 27. Now, all these promises are made good to us in Christ, who is the cautioner of the covenant: yea, he hath gotten now the dispensing and giving out of the rich promises of the covenant committed unto him, so as he is the great Lord treasurer and administrator of the great and glorious purchased blessings.

9. There are new waterings, breathings, and gale of the Spirit, given in Chaift, Ifa. 27. 3. He mu

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water his garden or vineyard every moment. This is the north-wind and the fourth wind that bloweth upon the garden, Cant. 4, 16. He must be as the dew unto Ifrach, Hos to serve

10. Thro' Christ is the believer brought into fuch a covenant-flare, as giveth great ground of hope of certain victory. He is not now under the law, but under grace; and bence inferreth the apostle, Rom. 6. 142 that fin fall not bave dominion over them. Being now under that dispensation of grace, whereby all their flock is in the Mediator's hand, and at his disposal, and not in their own hand and power as under the com renant of works, there is a fure ground laid down for constant supply and furniture in all necessities.

11. Christ hath prayed for this, John 17. 17. Santin y them through thy truth; where the Lord is praying, hat his disciples might be more and more fanctified, and so fitted and qualified for the work of the ministry bey were to be employed in. And what he prayed for hen, was not for them alone, but also for all the elect proportionably, who are opposed to the world, for

which he did not pray, v. 9.

derestoney for the laying of 12. He flandeth in relation to believers of a vine, oc root, in which they grow as branches; fo that, by biding in him, living by faith in him, and drawing ap from him, they bring forth fruit in him, Joby 19. 2, 4, 5. Their stock of grace is in him the root; nd he communicateth fap and life unto his branches, hereby they grow, flourish, and bring forth fruit to

he glory of God.

3.4.4.4.4

13. Christ hath taken on him the office of a Prophet d Teacher, to instruct us in the way wherein we ight to go: for he is that great Prophet, whom the ord promifed to raise up, and who was to be heard id obeyed in all things, Deut. 18, 15. Als 3. 22. 82 37. He is given for a entirefs, and a leader, Ila. 55. and we are commanded to hear him, Mat. 17. 5. ark 10. 7.

14. He hath also taken on him the office of a King, al. 2. 6. Mat. 28, 9. Ifa. 9. 7. Phil. 2. 8, 9, 10, 11. thereby flandeth engaged to fubdue all their spiri-

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toal enemies, Seese and corruption, Pfel. 110. He is given for a leader and commander, Ifa. 55. 4. and fo can cante his people walk in his ways.

ons and failings, he hash provided a fountain for us to wash in, a fountain opened to the bonje of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for fin and for uncleanness, Zech 13. 1. and this fountain is his blood, which cleanfest from all fin, Heb. 9. 14. 1 John 1. 7. Rev. 1, 5.

16. He is let before us as a Copy and Pattern, that we fould walk even as be walked, 1 John 2. 6. He left us an example, that we should follow his steps, 1 Pet. 2.

21. But we would beware to separate this consideration from the preceeding, as antichristian Socialans do, who will have Christ only to be a copy.

hath destroyed his works, I John 3.8. He came to de. froy the works of the devil, and in particular his works of wickedness in the soul. Thus he is a conqueror,

and the captain of our falvation.

dinances, for the laying of the foundation, and carrying on of this work of fanctification; both word and facraments are appointed for that. The word to convert and to confirm, John 17. 17. Sanctify them through the truth, the word is truth, faid Christ. The word is given as the rule; and also thro' the means thereof is life and strength conveyed to the foul, to perfect holinessin the fear of God, 1 Pet. 2. 2. And the sacraments are given to strengthen and confirm the soul in the ways of God.

his followers to hold on in the way of holiness, many great and precious promises, by which they might be partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4 and by which they are encouraged to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. 7, 1. and many motives to hold on and continue; so hath he rolled difficulties out of the way, whether they be with in us or without us, and thereby made the way easy and please

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mercies,

pleafant to fuch as walk in it; fo as they may now run in the way of his commandments, and walk and not weary, and run and not be faint:

Nay, 20. We would remember, for our encouragement and confidence, that in carrying on of this work lieth the fatisfaction of the foul, and the pleasure of the Lord that must prosper in his hand; and thus he seeth his seed, and hath of the travail of his soul, and is fatisfied.

These particulars rightly considered will discover unto us what a noble ground for fanctistication is in Christlaid down for believers, which they may and must by faith grip to, that they may grow in grace, and grow up in Christ, and perfect holiness; and what a wonderful contrivance of grace this is, wherein all things are made so sure for believers, Christ becoming all things to them, and paving a royal and sure way for them; sure for them, and glorious to himself.

As to the fecond particular, that is, How believers are to carry in this matter, or how they are to make use of Christ, and of these grounds of sanctification in Christ,

which we have mentioned.

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First, There are some things which they would be-

ware of, and guard against; as,

1. They would beware of an heartless despondency, and giving way to discouragements, and hearkning to he language of unbelief, or to the fuggestions of Satar, thereby he will labour to perswade them of the imposbility of getting the work of fanctification throughed, rany progress made therein to purpole. Satan and a eceitful heart can foon mufter up many difficulties, and lledge that there are many lions, many insuperable ifficulties in the way, to discourage them from ventuing forward: and, if Satan prevail here, he hath gaind a great point. Therefore the believer would keep p his head in hope, and heware of multiplying discouagements to himself, or of concluding the matter imoffible; for then shall he neither have heart nor hand or the work, but fir down and wring his hands, as orecome with discouragement and despondency of spirit. 2. They would beware of wilful rejecting their own

mercies, and forbearing to make afe of the grounds of hope of firength and progress in the matter of fanctification, which Christ hath allowed them to make ase of. There is such an evil amongs God's children, that they scar at that which Christ out of great love hath provided for them, and dare not with considence make use of, nor apply to themselves, the great and comfortable promises, to the end they might be encouraged: they will not take their allowance, as thinking themselves unworthy, and that it should be presumption in them to challenge a right to such great things; and they think it commendable humility in them, to stand aback; and so wilfully refuse the advantages and helps that make so much for their growth in grace.

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3. They would beware of a careless neglect of the means appointed for advancing in holiness; for the the means do not work the effect, yet it is by the means that God hath chosen to work the work of fanctification. Here that is to be seen, that the hand of the diligent maketh rich; and the field of the flothful is soon grown over with thorns and nettles, so that poverty cometh as one that travelleth, and want as an armed man, Prov. 24, 30, 31, 34. It is a finful tempting of God, to think to be sanctified another way than God bath in his deep

wildom condescended upon.

4. Yet they would beware of laying too much weight on the means and ordinances, as if they could effect ate the business. The the Lord hath thought good twork in and by the means, yet he himself must do the work. Means are but means, and not the principal agent cause; nor can they work, but as the principal agent pleased to make use of them, and to work by them when we lean to the means, and to instruments, we projudge ourselves, by disobliging God, and provoking his to leave us, that we may wrestle with the ordinance alone, and find no advantage. Therefore the soul would guard against this.

yet we would beware not only of neglecting them (we faid afore) but also of a flighting way of perferming of them without that carnetness and diligence to

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is required. Curfed is be cube doth the work of the Lord negligently, Jar. 48. 10. Here then is the special art of iadity apparent, to be as diligent, carnell and ferious in the ufe of the means, as if they could effectuate the matter we were feeking; and yet to be as much abstracted from them in our hopes and expectation, and to be as much leaning on the Lord alone, and depending on him for the blothing, as if we were using no meanwait all g or to goings too

6. They would beware of flighting and neglecting the motions of the Spirit; for thereby they may lote the best opportunity. They should be always on the ing, ready to embrace the least motion; and they flould fland always ready, waiting for the breathings of his Spirit, and open at his call; left afterward they be put to call and feel, and not attain what they would be at, as we fee in the spouse, Cant. 5. 2, 3, 4, 5; 6.

7. They would also guard against the quenching of Wn the Spirit, 1 Theff. 5. 12. or grieving of the Spirit, Est. 1 25 4 301 by their unchriftian and unfuitable carriage; 24 for this will much mar their fanctification. It is by the Spirit that the work of fanctification is carried on in he soul: and when this Spirit is disturbed, and put from his work, how can the work go on? When the notions of this indwelling Spirit are extinguished, his work is marred and retarded; and, when he is grieved, gainst unbelief, despendency, unsuitable and unchristic

8. Especially they would beware of wasting fins, fat. 51. 10. fins against light and conscience; such as David calleth prefumptuous fins, Pfat 19, 13, They rould beware also of favouring any known corruption, it any thing of that kind, that may hinder the work of

Secondly, It were nieful, and of great advantage for ich as would grow in grace, and advance in the by of holiness, to be living in the constant conviction. i. Of the necessity of holines, without which not

man shall see God, Heb. 12. 14. nothing entring in into the new Jerusalem that defileth, Rev. 21. 27.

2. Of their own inability to do any one act aright; how they are not sufficient of themselves to think any thing as of themselves, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and that without

Christ they can do nothing, John 15. 5.

3. Of the infufficiency of any human help, or means, or way, which they may think good to choose, to mortify aright one corruption, or to give strength for the right discharge of any one duty: for our sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and it is thro the Spirit that we must mortify the deeds of the body, Rom. 8. 12.

4. And of the treachery and deceitfulness of the heart, which is bent to follow by-ways, being not only deceitful above all things, but also desperately wicked,

Fer. 17. 9.

That, by this means, the foul may be jealous of it-felf, and despair of doing any thing in its own strength; and so be fortified against that main evil which is an enemy to all true sanctification, viz. considence in the sless.

Thirdly, The foul would keep its eye fixed on those

things ;

1. On Christ's all-sufficiency, to help in all cases; that

be is able to fave to the utermoft, Heb. 7.25.

2. On his compassionames to such as are out of the way, and readiness to help poor sinners with his grace and strength: and this will keep up the soul from fainting and despairing.

3. On the commands to holiness: such as those Cleanse your bearts, James 4. 8. and Be ye boly, for am boly, 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. and the like That the authority of God, and conscience to a com-

mand, may fet the foul awork.

4. On the great recompence of reward that is appointed for such as wrestle on, and endure to the end; and on all the great promises of great things to such as are sanctified, whereof the scriptures are full: that the send may be encouraged to run thorow difficulties, to

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and denunciations of wrath against such as transgress his laws, and on all the sad things that such as shake off the sear of God and the study of holiness have to look for, of which the scripture is full; that, by this means, the soul may be kept in awe, and spurred forward into duty, and made the more willing to shake off la-siness.

6. On the rule, the word of God, by which alone we must regulate all our actions: and this ought to be our reditation day and night, and all our study; as we see twas David's, and other holy men of God their daily

work. See Pfal. 1. & 119.

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Fourthly, In all this fludy of holiness, and aiming at n higher measure of grace, the believer would level at right end; and fo would not delign holiness for this nd, that he might be justified thereby, or that he might hereby procure and purchase to himself heaven and od's favour : for the weight of all that must ly on Jeus Christ, who is our righteousness; and our holiness buft not dethrone him, nor rob him of his glory, which e will not give to another : but would fludy holinefs, the end he might glorify God, Father, Son and holy pirit; and please him who calleth to holiness; and tereby be made meet to be partaker of the inheritance the faints in light, Col. 1. 10, 12, and be made a meet) ride for fuch a holy bridegroom, and a member to fuch ! holy head; that thereby others might be edified. lat. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 3. 1, 2. that the foul may ok like a temple of the holy Ghoft, and like a ferent of Christ's, bought with a price, I Cor. 6. 17, 18, , 20, and have a clear evidence of his regeneration nd justification, and also that he may express his thankhels to God for all his favours and benefits.

Fifthly, The foul would by faith lay hold on, and in fast to, the ground of fanctification; that is to fay, To what Christ hath purchased for his people. 2. To hat as a publick person he hath done for them. And by faith,

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1. Chal-

108 How Christ is made use of, 4. Challenge a eight to, and lay hold on, the promifes of grace, firength, victory, and through bearing, in

their combating with corruption within, and Sutan and a wicked world without a state in store and store of

2. Reckon themselves dead unto fin, through the death of Christ; and alive unto God through his refurrection, Rom. 6. 4, Tr. and that the old man is crucified with him, that the body of fin might be deftroyed, v. 6. and that they are now, not under the law, but un-

der grace, v. 14.

That by this means they may be encouraged to continue fighting against a vanquished enemy, and not give over, notwithstanding of disappointments, difcouragements, prevailings of corruption, &c. and the believer may know upon what goound he standeth, and what is the ground of his hope and expediation of victory in end; and fo he may run, not as uncertainly; and fo fight, not as one that beateth the air, 13 Cor. 9. 26.

sixthly. In this work of fanctification, the believer would be much in the lively exercise of faith; fight by faith; advance by faith; grow up, and bring forth fruit by faith and for a con ton , out

. The believer would be off renewing his grips of Chaff, holding him fast by faith, and so abiding in him,

that he may bring forth fruit, John 15. 4, 5.

2. Not only would be be keeping his union tall with Choiff, but he would be also eving Christ by faith, as his flore-house, and general Lord dispensator of all the purchased bleflings of the covenant which he standeth in weed of; and looking on Christ as standing engaged by effice to compleat his work of falvation, and to prefent him with the neft to himfelf boly, without ble mish, yea, and without foot or wentkle or any fuch thing Epbias, 27. compas vain ou rent offe bas .comental

3. He would by faith grip to the promiles, both of the general Rock of grace, the new heart and beart flesh, and the Spirit to cause us walk in his statutes Bzek. 36. 26, 27. and of the feveral particular acts of grace that he standeth in need of, Inch as that, Fer. 30 8. I will cleanse them from all their iniquities, &cc. (So EZIK

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Field. 36, 29. Fir. 32, 19.) so the Church doth! Mic. 7. 9: He will jubdue our iniquities, &cc. And fo, having (or gripping) these promises, we are to cleanly sugletoes from all filthiness of field and spirit, and perfect boliness in the fear of God, 2 Cor 7. 1.

4. As the believer would by faith draw out of Chrift, thro the conduit of the promiles, which are all year and amen in bim, 2 Cor. 1. 20: grace, frength, knowledge, courage, on whatever his fight in this warfare calleth for, to the end he may he firong in the Lord and in the power of bir might, Eph. 6, 10, so he would by faith sell the weight of the whole work upon Christ; and thus cast himself and his care and burden on him, who careth for him, 1 Ret. 5. 7. Pfal. 37. 5. 80 95. 22. and fo go on in duty without anxiety, knowing who beareth the weight of all, and who hath undertaken to work both to will and to do according to his good pleafure. Thus should the work be easy and safe, when by faith we roll the burden on him who is the chosen One fitted for that work, and leave it on him who is our strength, patiently waiting for the outgate, in hope of mola sale

Thus the believer makes use of Christ, as made of God santisfication, when in the use of means appointed, eying the covenant of grace, and the promises thereof, and what Christ hath done to sanctify and cleanse his people, he rolleth the matter on him, and expecteth help, salvation and victory thro him.

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But lest some should be discouraged, and thinkall this in vain, because they perceive no progress nor growth in grace for all this; but rather corruption as strong and troublesom as even; I would say a few things to them.

I. Let them fearth and try whether their fhort-coming and disappointment doth not much proceed from this, that the matter is not forcleanly cast over on Christ as it should be. Is it not too oft found, that they go forth to the battle in their own strength, lippening to their own slock of grace, to their own knowledge, or to their duties, or the like? How then can they prosper?

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2. Let

How Christ is made use of,

2. Let them mourn as they get any discovery of this; and guard hereafter against that corrupt bials of the heart, which is still inclining them to an engagement without the Captain of their falvation, and a fighting without the armour of God.

3. Let them try and fee, if in studying holiness they be not led by corrupt ends; and do not more labour after fanctification, that they may be more worthy, and the better accepted of God, and that they may have quietness and peace as to their acceptance with God, as if this were any cause, matter or condition of their righteousness and justification before God; than the may shew their obedience to the command of God. 1 Ib f 4 3. Epb. 2. 10. John 15. 16. and express their thankfulness to him, and glorify God, Mal. 1. 6. Mat. 5. 16. John 17. 10. Epb. 4. 30. And, if fo, they ought to acknowledge God's goodness in that disappointment, feeing thereby they fee more and more a necessity of laying afide their own righteoufness, and of betaking themselves to the righteonsness of Christ, and of resting on that alone for peace and acceptance with God.

They would try and fee, if their negligence and carelefness in watching, and in the discharge of duties, do not occasion-their disappointments and short-coming. God fometimes thinks fit to fuffer a lion of corruption to fet on them, that they may look about them, and fland more vigilantly upon their watch-tower, knowing that they have to do with a vigilant adversary, the devil, who as a roring lion goeth about, feeking whom he may devour, I Pet. 5. 8, and that they fight not against flelb and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against Spiritual wickednesses in bigb places, Eph. 6. 12. It is not for nought that we are to often commanded to watch, Mat. 24. 42 & 25 13. & 26. 41. & 14 38. Luke 21. 36. Mark 13. 33, 34, 35, 37. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Theff. 5. 6. Tet. 4. 7. Col. 4. 20 Thro' the want of this, we know what befel David and Peter.

5. They would try and fee, whether there be not too much self-confidence, which occasioned Peter's foul fall. God may, in justice and mercy, suffer corruption

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to break loofe upon fuch at a time, and tread them un-

der foot, to learn them afterward to carry more foberly, and to work out their faloation with fear and frembling, Phil. 2. 12, remembring what a jealous hely God he is with whom they have to do, what an advertary

they have against them, and how weak their own

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6. This would be remembred, that one may be growing in grace, and advancing in holinels, when to his apprehension, he is not going forward from frength to firength, but rather going backward. It is one thing to have grace, and another thing to fee that we have grace: fo it is one thing to be growing in grace, and another thing to fee that we are growing in grace. Many may question their growth in grace, when their very questioning of it may evince the contrary : for they may conclude no growth, but rather a back-going, because they perceive mo and more violent and frong corruptions, and hidden works of darkness and wickedness within their souls, than ever they did before: whileas that great discovery sheweth the increase of their spiritual knowledge: and an increase in this is an increase in grace, I So they may question and doubt of their growth, upon mistakes, as thinking corruption always ftrongest, when it makes the greatest flir and noise: or their complaints may flow from a vehement defire they have to have much more fanctification, which may cause them overlook many degrees they have advanced; or fome fuch thing may occasion their darkness and complaints: yea, God may think it fittest for them, to the end they may be kept humble and diligent, to be in the dark as to their progress; whereas, if they saw what advancement and progress they had made in Christianity, they might grow wanton, secure and careless, and so occasion some lad dispensation to humble them again.

7. It would be remembred, that perfect victory is not to be had here. It is true, in respect of justification thro' the imputation of the perfect righteousness of CHRIST, and in respect of their fincerity and sospel-simplicity, and in respect also of the parts of

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How Ghrift is made use of, 122 the new man, believers are faid to be perfect; fuch an one was North, Gen. 6.9. 8t 766, Chap. 1. 1, 8. fee alfo Pfal 37. 37. 62 64. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 6. Hob. 5. 14. James 3. 2. And it is true, we are to sim at perfection, and to pray for it, as Matth. 5. 48. 2 Gor. 13. 11. Gol. 4. Yet as to the degrees of holiness and fanctification, and in respect of the remnant of corruption within, shere is no full perfection here, Job 9, 20, 21. Phil. 3. 12. for even he who is washen, and as to justification is clean every whit, yet needeth to wash his feet, because contracting filth in his conversation, Job 14, 10. so that, if the Lord Should mark iniquity, no man Should Rand, Pfal. 120. 2. & 143. a. there will fill be in the best something, more or less, of that battle that Paul Speaketh of, Rom. 7. 19, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. so that they will ftill have occasion to cry out with him, . 34 O greeched man that I am, who hall deliver me from the body of this death? and the flesh will fill luft equipf the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that they ball not be able to do what they would, Gal. 5.17. The place of perfection is above, where all tears are wined away, and the weary wreftler is at reft. S. Let them not militake, and think, that every firing of corruption in the foul argueth its dominion and prevailing power. Corroption may fir and make a great deal ade, where it cannot get leave to reign;

and be as a violent and cruel invader, feeking the throne, putting the whole kingdom in a combustion, who is relifted with force of arms but a si

Corruption may be more quiet and still, when indeed it hath the throne of the foul; as a conqueror may be more quiet and fill, when he hath overcome, and is in peaceable possession of the kingdom, than when he was but fighting for it. When the ftrong man keeps the house, and is maker, then all is quiet and at reft, till a fronger come to thrust him out, and disposels bim day to south at our

o. Sandification doth not always confift in a man's freedom from fome corruptions: for there may be fome correspines that one bath no natural inclination to but

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but on the contrary, a great aversion from; as fome world's wratches may have no inclination to medigalisy and ranting, or such like vices, which are contrary to their bumour or to their confiant education that for may never tempt fome man to such svils, knowing he will get more advantage by plying his temper and genius, and so carrying him away to the other contrary evil; and so, the this man know not so much as what it is once to be tempted to those wices, yet that will not say that he is a fanctified man; far loss will it say that he hath more grace than another man, whose predominant

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nant that evil is, and against which he is daily fighting and wrothling. Whence it appeareth, that wrestling, and protosting against even an overcoming corruption, may evidence more of grace than freedom from some

evils to which some are not so much sempted, and to

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which they are naturally less inclined the most and any to. Nor should they think that corruption is always mafter of the foul, and possessing the throne as a full conquerer when it prevaileth and carrieth the foul headlong at a time: for corruption may fometimes come in upon the foul as an inundation with irrelifible violence, and for a time carry all before it, so that the foul cannot make any fentile relitance; as when a findeen, violent and unexpected temptation fetteth on, to as the poor man is overwhelmed, and fcarce know. eth where he is, or what he is doing sill he be laid on his back: at that time it will be a great matter if the foul dare quietly enter a protest against and diffent from what is done; and, if there be an honest protestation against the violent and tyrannical invasion of corruption on, we cannot fay that corruption is in peaceable poffellion of the throne; if the Spirit be Justing against the flesh, denying all the forces he can against the invader, by prayer and supplication to God, and calling in all the supply of divine help he can get, and, when he can do no more, is fighing and groning under that unjust invasion, resolving never to pay homage to the uturper, nor to obey his laws, por to much as parley with him, or make peace, we cannot fay that the foul doth confer fully unto this usurpation. Nay, if the

For Christis made use of, a former when Satan fees on with all his force; it will be a greater evidence

of the frength of grace in the foul, than if the foul

temptation is not to fronger with amount to the revenue

growing in them, because they advance not so far as some do, and because they come not to the pitch of grace that they see some advanced to: that is not a sure rule to measure their growth in grace by. Some may have a better natural temper, whereby they are less inclined to several vices which these find a strong propension to; they may have the advantage of a better education, and the like. So that they should rather try themselves this year, by what they were the last year, and that in reference to the lusts to which they have been most subject all their days.

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12. We must not think that every believer will attam to the same measure of grace. There is a measure appointed for every member or joint of this body; and every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, Epb. 4. 16. God hath more ado with some than with others; there is more frength required in an arm or leg, than in a finger or toe, And every one should be content with his measure, to far as not to fret or repine against God and his dispensation, that makes them but a finger, and not an arm of the body; and do their duty in their ffation, fighting against fin, according to the measure of grace dispensed to them of the Lord, and that faithfully and constantly; and not quarrel with God, that he maketh us not as free of temptations and corruptions as fome others. For the captain must not be blamed for commanding some of his foldiers to this post, where they never once fee the enemy; and others to that post, where they must continually fight: the foldier is here under command, and therefore must be quiet, and take his lot; so must the Christian reverence the Lord's difpenfations, in ordering matters to as they shall never have one hour squiemets, whileas others have more reft and peace; and fland at their post fighting, resolving never

in Santification, in general.

never to yield, but rather to cover the ground with their dead bodies, till the Commander in chief think good to relieve them. Sure I am, as the only wife God hath diffributed to every member of the body as he hath thought good, so it is the duty of every member to endeavour this holy submission to him as to the measure of grace, considered as his free gift, bestowed on them; and to be humbled for the grudgings of his heart, because God hath not given him mo talents: And fure I am, tho' this fubmission make no great noise in the world, yet really this is one of the highest degrees of grace attainable here, and fuch an ornament of a meek and quiet spirit as is in the fight of God of great price; so that whoever have attained to this, have the very grace they feem to want, and more. Yes, left this should be abused, let me add a word or two of caution, to qualify this submission. 1. There must be with it an high prizing even of that degree of grace which they want. 2. There must be a panting after grace, as it is God's image, and a conformity to him, and that with so much fingleness, as they may be in case to say, without the repreachings of their heart, they do not so much love holines for heaven, as heaven for holiness. There must be an uncessantness in using all means whereby the growth of grace may be promoved, to this end, that they may be conformed to his image, rather than that they may be comforted. 4. There must be also a deep humiliation for the want of that degree of grace they would have, as it importeth the want of fo much conformity to him, to whole image they are predeftinated to be conform: which will very well confift with this submission we are speaking of.

13. It would be remembred, that there may be a great progress, even when it is not observed: when, 1. Hereby the man is made to ly in the dust, to lothe himself, and cry, Bebold, I am vile. 2. Hereby his indignation against the body of death is the more increased. 3. Hereby his esteem of a Saviour and of the blescontrivance of salvation is the more heightned, that he seeth he is thereby brought to make mention of his rightcousness, even of his only. 4. Hereby his long-

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ing after immediate fruition is increased, where all these complaints stall cease. 5. And hereby he is put to estay that much slighted duty of holding fast the rejoicing of his hope firm unto the end, looking and longing for the grace that shall be brought unto him at the revelation of Jesus Christ, when he shall be presented without spot, and made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

## CHAP, VI.

How Christ is to be made use of, in reference to the killing and crucifying of the old man.

Aving thus hortly pointed out fome things in general, ferving to the clearing and opening up the way of our use-making of Christ for functification; we come now more particularly to the clearing up of this business. In functification we must consider, first, The renewing and changing of our nature and frame; and next, The washing and purging away of our daily contracted spots. The first of these is commonly divided into two parts, siz. I. The mortification, killing and crucifying of the old man of sin and corruption, which is within; and, at The vivisication, renewing, quickning and strengthning of the new man of grace; and this is a growth in grace, and in fruitfulness and holiness.

As to the first of these, viz. the mortification or crucifying of the old man; we would know, that there is such a principle of wickedness and emitty against God, in man by nature, now fince the fall, whereby the man is inclined to evil, and only to evil. This is called the old man, as being, like the body, made up of so many parts, joints and members, that is, so many lusts and corruptions and evil inclinations, which together make up a corpus; and they are fast joined and compacted together, as the members of the body, each useful and serviceable to another, and all of them concurring and contributing their utmost to the carrying on of the work of sin; and so it is the man of sin; and it is also called the old man, as having first possession of the soul before

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it is by grace renewed, and is a dying more and more daily. Thus it is called the old man, and the body of fin, Rom. 6. 6. This old man hath his members in our mome bers and faculties, fo that none of them are free; understanding, will, affections, and the members of our body, are all fervants of unrighteonfness to this body of fin, and old man. So we read of the motions of fin, Rom. 7. 5. which work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, and of the tufts of the flest, Rom. 13. 14. Gal. 5. 16, 24. and the lufts of fin, Rom. 6. 12. So we hear of the defires of the flesh, and of the mind, Rph. 2. 3. and of affections and lufts, Gal. 5. 24. And the old man is faid to be corrupt, according to the descritful lufts, Eph. 4. 22. All which lufts and affections are as so many members of this body of sin, and of this old man. And further, there is herein confiderable a power, force and efficucy, which this old man hath in us, to carry us away, and, as it were, command us, or confirain us, as by a forcible law. Hence we read of the law of fin and death, Rom. 8. 2. which only the last of the Spirit of life in Christ doth make us free from. It is also called a low in our members warring against the law of our mind, Rom. 7. 23, and bringing us into captivity to the law of fin which is in our members. So it is faid to luft against the Spirit, and to war, Gal. 5. 17. All which point out the firength, activity and dominion of fin in the foul; fo that it is as the husband over the wife, Rom. 7. 1. yea, it hath a domineering and conftraining power, where its horns are not held in by grace. And as its power is great, fo its nature is wicked and malicious; for it is pure enmity against God, Rom. 8. 7. 6 that it neither is nor can be reconciled, and therefore must be put off and abolished, Eph. 2. 15. killed and crue cified, Rom. 6. 6. Now, herein lieth the work of a believer, to be killing, mortifying and erucifying this enemy, or rather enmity; and delivering himself from under this bondage and flavery, that he may be Christ's free-man, and that thro' the Spirit, Rom. 8. 13. on this

Now, if it be asked, flow shall a believer make nie of Christ, to the end this old man may be gotten crucified? or, how should a believer mornity this old man,

and the last thereof, thro' Christ, or by the Spirit of Jesus? We shall propose those things which may help to clear this;

The believer would have his eye on this old man. as his arch-enemy, as a deadly cut throat lying within his bosom. It is an enemy lodging within him, in his foul, mind, heart and affections, fo that there is no part free; and therefore is acquaint with all the motions of the fonl, and is always oppoling and hindring every thing that is good: It is an enemy that will never be reconciled to God, and therefore will not be reconciled with the believer as fuch; for it is called mmity itself: and fo it is actively always feeking to promove the ruin of the foul, what by prompting, inclining, moving, and forcibly drawing or driving (fometimes' with violence and rage) to evil; what by withflanding, relifting, oppoling, counter-working and contradicting what is good; fo that the believer cannot get that done which he would do, and is made to do that which he would not. Therefore, this being such an enemy, and so dangerous an enemy, to conftant and implacable an enemy, to active and close an enemy, so deadly and deftructive; it is the believer's part, to guard against this enemy, to have a vigilant eye upon it, to carry as an irreconcileable encmy thereunto; and therefore never to come in terms of capitulation or agreement therewith, never once to parley, let be make peace. And the believer would not have his vigilant eye upon this or that member of this body of death, fo much as upon the body itself, or the principle of wickedness and rebellion against God; the head, life, spirit or law of this body of death; for there lieth its greatest wickedness and activity; and this is always opposing us, tho not in every joint and member but fometime in one, fometime in another.

body, this innate, strong and forcible law of fin and death; yet should he have friendship and familiarity with no part, member or lust of all-this body: all the deeds of the body should be mortified, Rom. 8. 13. the old man with his deeds should be mortified, Gol. 2. 6. and we should mortify our members which are

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upon the earth, v. 5. for all of them are against us; and the least of them countenanced, entertained and embraced, will work our ruin, and cut our souls throat: therefore should the believer look on each of them, and on all of them, as his deadly enemies.

3. He would confider, that as it is a very unfeemly thing for him to be a flave to that old tyrant, and to yield his members as so many servants to iniquity; so it is dangerous and deadly: his life lieth at the stake; either he must get it mortified, killed and subdued, or it will kill him; his life will go for its life; if this enemy escape, he is a gone man. The consideration of this would cause the believer act here in earnestness and seriousness, with care and diligence, and set about this

work of mortification with labour and pains.

4. Much more must it be against all reason and Chrifinnity, for the believer to be making provision for the feb, to fulfil the lufts thereof, Rom. 13. 14. To be frengthning the hands of, and laying provision to, this enemy, which is fet and fworn against us, can stand with to reason. And here is much of the Christian's prudence and spiritual wisdom required, to discern what may make for foftering of this or that corruption or memer of the body of fin and death, and to withdraw that, we will labour to take away provision of any kind rom an enemy that is coming against us. Paul acted erein, as a wife gameffer and combatant, when he kept inder his body, and brought it into subjection, 1 Cor. 9. 7. It were but to mock God, and to preach forth our wn folly, to be looking to Christ for help against fuch n enemy, and in the mean time to be under-hand rengthning the hands of the enemy: this would be ouble-dealing and treachery against ourselves.

the fironger and more resolute, they would consider, that this body of fin is wholly set against God and his intest in the soul, being very enmity itself against God, sm. 8. 7. and always suffing and fighting against the tork of God in the soul, Gal. 5. 17. and against every ling that is good, so that it will not suffer (so far as it in hinder) the soul to do any thing that is good, it

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How to make use of Christ, least in a right manner, and for a right end : nay, with its luftings it driveth conftantly to that which is evil, raifeth evil motions and inclinations in the foul, ere the believer be aware; fideth with any temptation that is offered, to the end it may deftroy the foul, like a traitor within; as we see it did in David, when he fell in adultery; and with Afaph, Pfal. 73. 2. yea, itfelf opposeth and tempteth, James 1. 14. by fetting mind, will and affections on wrong courles: and thus it driverh the foul to a courfe of rebellion against God, or diverts it, and draws it back, that it cannot get God served aright. Yea, fomerimes it fets a fire in the foul, intangling all the faculties, filling the mind with darkness or prejudice, miffeading or perverting the affections, and fo mifcarrying the-will, and leading it captive, Rom. 7. 23. fo that the thing is done which the regenerate foul would not do, and the duty is left undone which the foul would fain have had done; yea, and that fometimes notwithflanding of the foul's watching, and firriving against this; fo ffrong is its force.

6. The believer would remember, that this enemy is not for him to fight against alone, and that his own ffrength and skill will make but a flender opposition unto it: it will laugh at the shaking of his spear. It can eafily infinuate itself on all occasions, because it lieth to near and close to the foul, always reliding there, and at the believer's right hand whatever he be doing, and is always openly or clofly oppofing, and that with great facility: for it easily besetteth, Heb. 12. 1. because lieth within the foul, and in all the faculties of it, it the heart, mind, will, confcience and affections; fo that upon this account, the deceitfulness of the heart is great and paffeth the fearch of man, Fer. 17. 9. Man canno know all the windings and turnings, all the drifts and deligns, all the lurking and retiring places, all the falshoods and double-dealings, all the diffimulation lies and subrerfuges, all the plausible and deceitful pr texts and infinuations of his heart, acted and folrited this law of fin and death. And, beside this sleight at conning, it hath strength and power to draw by he into defiruction and perdition, I Tim. 4. 9. and to care

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the foul headlong; fo that it makes the man's cale miferable, Rom. 7: 24. All which would say, that the believer should call in other help than his own, and remember, that through the Spirit he must mortify the deeds of the body, Rom. 8. 13.

7. And therefore the believer must lay aside all his carnal weapons in dealing with this adversary, and look out for divine help and affiffance, even for the promiled Spirit, thro which alone he can be instructed and mabled for this great work; for of himself he can do nothing, not to much as think a good thought as of himelf, 2 Cov. 2. 5. far lefs will he be able to oppose such mighty adversary, that hath fo great and many advanages: and therefore all his carnal means, purpofes; ows and fightings in himself, will but render himself reaker, and a readier prey unto this adversary, which aineth ground while he is to opposed. It is Christ lone, and his Spirit, that can destroy the works of the

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8. So that the believer must have his recourfe, for elp and fuccour here, unto Jesus the Captain of falvaon; and must follow him, and fight under his banner; take use of his weapons, which are spiritual; fight acording to his counsel and conduct, taking him as a ader and commander, and lying open for his orders nd instructions, waiting for the motions of his Spirit, nd following them: and thus oppose and fight against his deadly enemy, with an eye always on Christ by ith, depending on him for light to the mind, refoluon to the will, and grace to the whole foul, to fland the battle, and to withftand all affaults: and never gage in a dispute with this enemy, or any luft or memand I the er of this body, without Christ the principal; that is coul would despair in itself, and be strong in him, in the power of his might, by faith gripping to him head, captain and commander in chief, refolving to ght in his strength, and to oppose, thro' the help of his Dirit.

9. And, for this cause, the believer would eye the venant of redemption, the basis of all our hope and molation, wherein final and full victory is promited

How to make use of Christ, 132 to Christ, as head of the elect, oiz, that he shall bruile the ferpent's head; and so that, in him, all his followers, and members of his mystical body, shall lift up the head, and get full victory at length over both fin and death. Now, it is God that giveth us the villery, through our Lord Jesus Chrift, 1 Cor. 15. 57. The believer would also eye by faith the covenant of grace, wherein particularly this same victory is promised to the believer, in and thro Jesus, Rom. 16. 20. And the God of peace fall bruife Satan under your feet Sbortly : And, Si fall not bave dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. 6. 14. The believer, I fay, would look out by faith unto, and lay hold on, the and the like promises; and thereby get strength conveyed to himself, whereby he may strive lawfully, and fight valiantly, and oppose with courage and resolution

10. Further, the believer would eye Chrift as a found tain of furniture, as a full and compleat magazine flanding open, and ready for every one of his hone foldiers to run to, for new supply of what they want -fo that, whatever they find wanting in their christia armour, they must run away to the open magazing - Christ's fulness, that standeth ready for them, and b faith take and put on what they want and fland in nee of in their warfare. If their girdle of truth be flacked loofed or weakned, and they be meeting with tempt tions anent their hypocrify, and Satan objecting to the their double-dealing, of purpose to discourage then and to make them faint and give over the fight; the must away to him, who is the Truth, that he may be on that girdle better, and make their hearts more right before God in all they do. And if their brea plate of righteoufness be weakned, and Satan the feem to get advantage, by caffing up to them their u righteous dealings towards God or men, they must h to him who only can help here, and beg pardon the his blood for their failings, and fet to again a-fresh the battle. If their resolution, which is understood the preparation of the gespel of peace, grow weak, must be renewed in Christ's armory, and the feet of o be shod therewith. If their shield of faith begin

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fail them, away must they get to him, who is the author and finisher of faith, Heb. 12. 2. And, if their helmet of hope begin to fail them, in this armory alone can that be supplied. And if their sword be blunted in their hand, or they unable to weild it aright, the Spirit of Jesus can only teach their hands to fight, and instruct them how to manage that useful weapon with advantage. Thus must the believer be firong in him, and in the power of his might, Eph. 6. 10. He is their God that girdeth them with strength, and maketh their way perfect. He maketh their feet like hinds feet, and setteth them upon their high places. He teacheth their hands to war, so that a how of steel is broken by their arms. He giveth them the shield of salvation. His right-hand upholdeth them. He girdeth with strength unto the hattle, &cc. Psal. 18.

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11. For the further strengthning of their hope, faith and confidence, believers would eye Christ as hanging on the crofs, and overcoming by death, death and him that had the power of death, the devil; and so as menitoriously purchasing this redemption from the slavery of fin and Satan, and particularly from the flavery of that body of death, and of the law of fin and death: for the apostle tells us, Rom. 8. 2. that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus doth make us free from the law of fin and death; and that because, as he saith further, v. 3, 4. What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the ikeness of sinful flest, and for fin condemned sin in the les: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled ws. So that the believer may now look upon that enemy, how fearful foever it appear, as condemned and kiled in the death of Christ. He, having laid down the price of redemption, hath bought this freedom from the hains and fetters with which he was held in captivity. faith then on the death of Jesus, satisfying justice for he poor captive, may and should support and strengthen he hope and confidence of the believer, that he shall brain victory at length.

12. And it will further confirm the hope and faith of be believer, to look to Christ hanging on the cross, and

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How to make use of Christ, there vanquishing and overcoming this archienemy, as a publick person, representing the elect, who died in him; and virtually and legally did in him overcome that jaylor, and break his fetters: and the foul now believing, may, yea, should reckon itself in Christ, dying, as it were, upon the cross; and there overcoming all those Spiritual enemies. Likewife (faith the apostle, Rom. 6.11.) veckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto fin. From hence, even while fighting, the believer may account himself a conqueror, yea, more than a conqueror, thro' him that loved him, Rom, 8. 27. Now, faith acting thur on Christ, as a publick person, dying, and overcoming death and fin; the believer may not only infer the certainty of victory, knowing that our old man is crucified with Christ, Rom. 6. 6. but also from the cross of Christ draw strength to stand, and fight against the strugglings of this vanquished and killed enemy. They that are Chrift's, bave crucified the fleft, with the affections and lufts, Gal. 5. 24. But how? even by the gross of Christ; for thereby is the world crucified unto me (faith the apollo, Gal. 6. 14.) and I unto the world. Your old man is crue feet with bim, that the body of fin might be deftroyed, Rom. 6. 6, 13. The believer, being dead indeed unto fin, thro the cross of Christ, is to look upon himself as legally freed from that yoke of bondage under fin and death The law bath dominion over a man, fo long as be lived Rom. 7. 1. but, by the body of Chrift, believers are become dead to the law, v. 4. That law of fin and death, which hath dominion over a man that liveth fill in nature, and is not yet by faith planted in the likeness of Christ death, nor buried with him by baptism into death, Ron 6. 415. hath not that dominion over believers it ha once: for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus bat this r made them free from the law of fin and death, Rom. 8. So that now the believer is free from that tyranny, an to ob that tyrant can exerce no lawful jurisdiction or authorit traito the fo over him; and therefore he may with the greater co equita rage repel the infolencies of that tyrant, that contra tribut to all right and equity feeketh to lord it over him fi rity in They are no lawful fubjects to that cruel and ragu ment prince, or to that spiritual wickedness

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14. So that the believer renouncing that jurisdiction under which he was formerly, and being under a new husband, and under a new law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, is to look upon all the motions of fin as illegal and as treasonable acts of a tyrant. The old man being crucified with Christ, that the body of fin might be defiroyed, the believer is not any more to lerve fin. Rom. 6. 6. and, being now dead, they are freed from fin, v. 7. and are married to another, even to bim, subo is raifed from the dead; and fo they Spould not ferve fin, but bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. 7.4. and therefore look upon all motions of the flesh, and all the inclinations and ftirrings of the old law of fin, as acts of treachery and rebellion against the right and jurisdiction of the believer's new Lord and Husband; and are therefore obliged to lay hold on this old man, this body of death, and all the members of it, as traitors to the rightful King and Husband, and to take them prisoners to the King, that he may give out fentence, and execute the fame, against them, as enemies to his kingdom and interest in the soul: They being now no more servants of fin, but of righteoufnets, Rom. 6.18. they pught no more to yield their members fervants to uncleanness and iniquiry unto iniquity, o. 19. and being debrors no more to the fieth, to live after the fieth, Rom. 8. 12. they are to mortify the deeds of the body thro' the Spirit, v. 19. and to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lufts, Gal. 5. 24. that is, by bringing them to the cross of Christ, where first they were condemned and crucified in their full body and power, that a new fentence, as it were, may go out against them, as parts of that condemned tyrant, and as belonging to that crucified body.

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15. So that the believer, that would earry faithful in this matter, and fight lawfully in this warfare, and hope to obtain the victory thro' Jefus Christ, must bring these traitors, that appear in their finful motions and lusts in the foul, working rebellion against the just authority and equitable laws of the lawful Prince, Jesus, before the tribunal of him, who hath now got all power and authority in heaven and earth, Mat. 28. 18. and hath all judgment committed to him, John 5, 22. and to this end both

died

How to make use of Christ, died and rofe, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, Rom. 14. 9. that he may execute juffice upon the traitor, head and members; that he may trample these devils under, and bruise the head of these serpents within us. The believer then is, by faith in prayer, to carry these open enemies to Christ, and declare and witness against them as traitors, by what mischief they have done in the foul, by their hindring the righteous laws of the King to be obeyed, and confraining and forcing, what by arguments or allurements, and what by forcible inclinations and poulings, to disobe. dience and a counteracting of Christ; and he should urge and plead upon the fundamental laws of the land, olz. the articles of agreement betwirt the Father and the Son, and the faithful promises of the covenant of grace, and upon Christ's office as King and Governor, and his undertaking as Mediator; upon the merits of his death and fufferings; upon his dying as a common person; upon the conflitution of the gospel, whereby they are in law repute as dying in him, and so free from the law of fin and death; and upon their relation to him as their new Lord, Head, Husband, King, Commander, &c. Upon these arguments (I say) to plead for justice against the rebel, that is now brought to the bar, and to by faith leave the prisoner in his hand, that he may, in his own time and way, give a fecond blow unto the neck of this implacable and raging enemy, that he may not rile up to diffurb the peace of the foul, as before; or to trouble, impede and molest the foul in paying the homage and obedience due to his lawful Mafter and Sovereign King Jefus.

Cautions and Directions.

For further clearing of the premisses, I would propose a few particulars for Caution and Direction: as,

1. This work of laying the burden of this bufined on Christ by faith, would be gone about with much singleness of heart, aiming at the Glory of God, and the carrying-on of his work in the soul; and not so felf ends, and carnal by-respects, less thereby we may all.

2. It would be carried on, without partiality, again

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all and every one of the lufts and motions of the old man: for, if there be a compliance with and a sparing of any one known luft, the whole work may be marred, they may meet with a disappointment as to the particular luft they are desiring victory over; and the luft they are harbouring, tho it may seem little, may open a door to many stronger, and so occasion sad

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3. As they would bring the particular luft, or lufts, unto Chrift, as chief Lord Justice; so they would always lay the ax to the root of the tree, and crave justice against the main body that yet lieth within the foul: and these particular corruptions and affections, that are as members of that body of fin, should put them in mind of the old man; for they should eracify the flest with the affections and lufts thereof, Gal. 5. 24. the body and the members. These lusts are the lusts of fin, or of that head-fin, which hath a law, or the force and impulse of a law, in the foul: and therefore their main design would be against this root, where lieth the strength and body of the enemy, and which acteth in those members; this is the capital enmity, and should be mainly opposed. And the following of this course would prove more successful than that which many a time we take: our nibbling at, or wreftling against, this or that member of the body of death, is but of little advantage, so long as the main body of fin, the bitter root of wickedness, the carnal mind, this innate enmity is miskent, and not opposed; but, on the contrary, firike at this, we firike at all.

4. This would be the believer's constant work, to be crucifying the stelle, with the lusts thereof; to be mortifying their members, wherein the members of the old man quarter and lodge, Col. 3. 5. to be spiritually-minded, and to mind the things of the Spirit, Rom. 8. 5, 6. for this carnal mind is enmity against God, Rom. 8. 7. and so it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, It is not only an enemy, which may be reconciled; but enmity in the abstract, which never can be reconciled; and this enmity will never be idle; for it cannot, till it be sully and shally destroyed; the sless is always sustain

against the Spirit, Gal. 1.1. for sher are contrary one to the other. So that tho, to our fense, it may sometimes appear as sleeping, in regard that it doth not by some particular lust so molest and perplex the soul as formerly it did; yet it is restless, and may be more active in another lust; and so, by changing weapons upon us, deceive us. Here then is much spiritual wisdom and vigilancy required: when they think they have gotten one lust subdued, they must not think the war is at an end; but, after all their particular victories, watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation.

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5. This way of laying the weight of the matter on Christ, should and will keep them humble, and teach them not to ascribe the glory of any good that is done unto themselves, but to give him all the glory, who is jealous of his glory, and will not give it to another; that the crown may alone flourish on his head, who is the Captain of their salvation, and who by his Spirit

worketh all their works in them.

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6. Nor would this way of carrying the matter to Christ, and putting it over on him, cause the believer become negligent in commanded duties, reading, hearing, prayer, &c. for it is there he must expect to meet with Christ, there must he seek him, and there must he wait for him and his Spirit to do the work defired: for the he hath not limited himself to these means, so as he cannot, or will not, any other way help; yet he hath bound us to them; and it is our duty to wait there, where he hath commanded us to wait, the should sometime think good to come another way, for the manifestation of the sovereignty of his grace.

7. Yet, while we are about the means, we would guard against a leaning to them, lest, instead of getting victory over corruption, we be brought more in bondage thereunto another way. We must not think that our prayers, or our hearing or reading, &c. will bring down the body of death, or subdue any one corruption; for that were but a yielding to corruption, and opening a back-door to the carnal mind, and to another deadly lust, and a bearing corruption with a sword of straw: this is not to mortify the deeds of the body thro

will never draw blood of this spiritual wickedness, or old man, or of any corrupt lust or affection thereofs and yet, how many times doth our deceitful heart biass us this way? Our work would be, as is said, to use the ordinances as means whereby we may get the business laid on Christ, and help from Christ to do the business. We must go to the means with our prisoner, to find Christ there at his court and assizes, that he may take course with the traitor.

S. In all this there would be a looking to and dependence on Christ for help and grace; because of ourselves, as of ourselves, we cannot do this much, we cannot complain aright of corruptions, nor take them away to Christ, nor ask for justice against them. As constables and other officers must carry malefactors to the courts of justice upon publick charges, so Christ will not have us doing or attempting this much on our

own charges; for he giveth noble allowance.

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9. In following of this course, we would not think always to come speed at the first. Sometimes the Lord, for the encouraging of his children, may give them a speedy hearing, and deliver them from the tyranny of some particular lust or other, that hath troubled them; that for some time, at least, it shall not so trouble them as it did: yet he will not do so always, but may think it good to keep them waiting on him, and hanging on his courts for some considerable time, that he may thereby exercise their faith, patience, desires, zeal and diligence. So that it should not seem strange to us, if we be not admitted at the first, and get not our answer at the first cry.

10. When the Lord thinketh good to delay the answer to our defires, and the execution of justice on the malefactor and traitor, or to deliver us from his tyrangle and trouble, we would beware of thinking to capitulate with the enemy for our peace and quiet, or to enter into a cellation of arms with him; that is, our enmity against him should never abate, nor should our defire after the mortification and crucifixion of this lust grow less; nor should we be quiet and at peace, tho it

How to make use of Christ,

should feem to grow a little more calm and still, or not to rage as formerly; for this looks but like a covenant of

confederacy with luft, which will not fland.

11. We would also know, that what Christ faid of devils, holdeth good of these lusts, viz. that some of them do not go out but by fasting and prayer; that is, by Christ sought unto and found in these means. There are some lusts that will not be got so easily killed and mortified as others, but will cost us more pains and labour, as being corruptions which possibly have some greater advantage of our natural temper and conflitution of body, or of long continuance and a curfed habit, or the like: we must not then think it strange, if fome fuch luft be not subdued so easily as some others, to which wehave fewer and weaker, and not to frequent

te mptations.

12. As we cannot expect a full conquest of the body of death so long as we are here, as was shown above; so nor can we expect a full and final victory over any one luft which ever we have been troubled with. It is true, believers may be kept from fome gross outbreaking of a corruption which sometime prevailed, as Peter was from relapting into an open and downright denying his Mafter: yet that same corruption did atterward ftir, the not so violently as to carry him to fuch an height of fin, yet so far as to cause him do that which was a partial denying of his Master, when Paul withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed for withdrawing from the Gentiles, for fear of them of the Circumcifion, &c. Gal. 2. 11, 12. So, tho' a particular luft may be fo far fubdued thro' grace, as that for some considerable time a man may no find it to violent as it was; yet he cannot fay that it is totally killed, because it may flir thereafter in some weaker meafure; yea, he cannot tell but, ere he come to die, that same corruption may rise to be as violent as ever, and that Satan may again think to enter the foul at that fame breach which once he entred at: yea, and who can tell whether God may not fuffer that corruption, which lay long as dead, to revive again for a time, and for a time drive the foul as violently as ever, and pre-

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vail for a time? And this should teach all to walk soberly, watchfully, and in fear, and to have a vigilant eye, even upon such lusts and carnal affections as they

may suppose they have got the victory of.

12. We would not think that we gain no ground upon corruption, because we ftill perceive it ftirring, less or more: for as corruption is not always ftrongett (as was faid above) nor bath the deepeft footing in the foul, when its motions and flirrings are most felr; fo. nor must we think that there is no ground gained upon a luft, because we are still troubled and molested with its ffirrings: for it is a great advantage to be more fenfible of the motions of this enemy, and our more faithful and active wreftling against it may make its least stirrings more fensible to us; as the motions and trouble which a malefactor, while in grips and in prison, maketh, may be thought more of, than his greater ragings before he was apprehended; yet he may be fure in fetters for all that: a beaft that hath gotten death's blow may get out of grips and run more mad then ever. and yet will die at length of the same blow.

14. Tho we should not find present ease and quiet by our following this way, yet we should think it much if the Lord help us to stand when we have done all we can, tho we meet not with the hoped-for success presently. If he give us grace to continue without wearying or fainting, and to be resolved never to give over, we have reason to bless him; if we be kept still in the constict with pursuit of the enemy, it is our great advantage; the victory shall come in God's own time. If our opposition so continue, that we are resolved never to to take nor give quarter, tho our trouble and exercise be the greater, and our case and quiet the less, we ought to bless him, yea, and rejoice in hope of what he shall yet do for us: for He that will come shall come, and will not tarry. Let us wait for him, in doing our duty, and

faithfully keeping our post.

of raging lufts for any little time, and be not continually driven and carried headlong therewith, we ought to be thankful for this, and to walk humbly before him,

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How to make afe of Christ, left he be provoked thro' our unthankfulness and pride to let these furious dogs loose upon as again.

16. When we are bending our strength and all our sorces against some one corruption or other which possibly hath been most troublesom to us, we would not be secure as to all others, or think that we are in hazard only on this side: for Satan may make a faint here, and really intend an assault at another place by some other corrupt affection. O what need have we of spiritual wisdom, that we may be better acquainted with his stratagems and wyles! Let us so then sight against one member of this body of death, as to have our eye upon others, lest, when we think to keep out Satan at the fore-door, he enter in at the back-door. He can make use of extremities, and play his game with both, yea, and gain his point if we be not aware.

Objections answered.

It will not be amis, for further explaining of the matter, to remove a scruple or two. Some may say, That they cannot perceive that all their pains in this matter come to any good iffue; for they never found corruption fir more, and act more lively and incessfantly, than since they began to fight against it in earnest: So that this would feem not to be the right way.

I answer, Tho', from what is said before, particularly cautions 9th and 13th, a resolution of this doubt may be had; yet I shall propose those things, for further clearing of the matter.

the whole work to wholly off thyfelf, and upon Christ, as then oughtest to do? Try and see.

2. May not the devil rage most, when he thinks ere long to be ejected? May he not labour to create most trouble to the soul, when he seeth that he is like to be put from some of his strengths?

3. May not the devil be doing this of purpole to drive thee to despair of ever getting corruption subdued and mortified, or to a fainting and sitting up in the pursuit, and to a despondency of spirit, that so, instead of fighting or standing, thou may cede and turn the back? and should we comply with him in his designs?

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A. May not the Lord give way to this for a time, to try thy feriousness, patience, submission and faith, and to tharpen thy diligence, and kindle up thy zeal? and should we not submit to his wife dispensations?

. How can thou fay that thou gainest no advantage, as long as thou art not made to lay afide the metter wholly, as hoples of any good iffue; but, on the contrary, art helped to fland, and to relift fin, to cry out against it, and to fight as thou canst, and at least not to

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6. What if God fee it for thy advantage, that thou be kept so in exercise for a time, to the end thou may! be kept humble, warchful and diligent? He may fee more of thee than thou can't fee of thyfelf, and so may know what is best for thee: and, shouldst thou not condescend to be disposed of by him as he will, and to let him make of thee and do with thee what he will?

7. What if God be about to chaften thee thus, for they former negligence, fecurity and unwatchfulness, and giving too too much advantage to those lufts which now, after his awakning of thee, thou wouldft be delivered from? shouldst not thou bear the indignation of the Lord, because thou hast finned against him? as the church resolved to Micab 1.9

8. Is it not thy duty, the more that corruption fir. to run with it the offner to Christ, that he may subdue it, and put it to filence? may not thou improve this to

advantage, by making many errands to him?

9. May it not come in a day, that hath not come in a year? art thou fure that all thy pains shall be in vain? or thinks thou that all his children have got yickory. alike foon over their lufts? what cause is there then to complain thus?

10. May not all this convince thee that it is the duly to wait on him in the ule of his appointed means, and to be patient, standing fast to thy post, resolving, when

thou haft done all, yet to stand ?

II. May not this fatify thee, that God thro grace accepteth thy labour and wreftling as thy dury, and accounterh it fervice to him, and obedience ! But

But again, it may possibly be objected thus; So long as I am in this condition, kept at under with my justs, I cannot get God glorified and served as he ought to be.

I answer, Tho', so long as it is so with thee, thou cannot glorify and serve him in such a particular manner as others, who have got more victory over those evils under which thou are groning; yet God can get glory

and fervice of thee another way : as,

1. By thy submission with calmness of spirit to his wise dispensations, when thou darest not speak against him, and say with Rebices in another case, If it be so, why am I thus? but sweetly and willingly castest thyself down at his feet, saying, Good is the will of the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, &cc.

2. By thy patient on-waiting, when thou art not wearying nor fainting, but faying, Why should I not wait upon the great King's leifure? Is he not free to come when he will? Dare I set limits to the holy One

of Ifrael?

3. By thy humility, when thou bleffest him for keeping thee so long out of hell; and thinkest much of his giving thee grace to see and observe the stirrings of corruption, which carnal wretches never perceive; and helping thee to withstand and complain of corruption, which they sweetly comply with.

4. By thy hatred of fin, when all that Satan can do cannot make the comply with those lufts, or sweety embrace those vipers, or ly down in peace with those rot-

ten members of the old man, as others do.

5. By thy watchfulness, when all thy disappointments cause thee the more earnestly watch against that enemy.

6. By thy acting faith, when still thou are carrying fin in its lusts to Christ to kill and subdue, as believing

the tenor of the gospel and new covenant.

7. By thy hope, which appeareth by thy not despairing and giving over the matter as a hopeless business, and turning aside to wicked courses,

8. By thy praying, when thou crieft to him conti-

nually for help, only who can help.

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on; for thereby is his firength made perfect in weakness, a Cor. 12. 9.

10. By thine obedience: for it is his command, that

thou fland and fight this good fight of faith.

So that, if thou haff a defire to glorify him, thou wants not occasion to do it, even in this condition wherein thou complainess that thou cannot get him glorified. And, if those grounds do not satisfy thee, it is to be feared that it is not so much a desire to glorify him, that moyeth thee to cry so earnessly for actual delivery from the trouble of the sless and lusts thereof, as something else, which thou may search after and find out; such as love to ease, quietness, applause and commendation of others, or the like.

But, in the third place, it may be objected, Is it not promised, that sin shall not have dominion over us, as not being under the law, but under grace? Rom. 6. 14. How can we then but be troubled, when we find not

this promise made good?

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I answer, I. Sin is not always victorious and domineering, when it seemeth to rage and stir most. Your opposition thereunto, fighting and wrestling against it, sheweth that it hath not full dominion: So long as an invading usurper is opposed, he hath not full dominion, not having peaceable possession of what he is seeking; and thus the promise is in part accomplished.

2. Victory and a full conquest over the sless, and lusts thereof, is not promised to any believer at his sirst appearing in the fields to sight; nor granted to all, in any measure, at their first putting on their armour.

3. Therefore it is thy part to fight on, and wait for that full victory, viz. that fin shall not have dominion

over thee; for it shall come in due time.

4. God bath his own time and seasons wherein he accomplisheth his promises: and we must leave him a latitude, both as to the time when, and as to the manner how, and as to the degree in which he shall make good his promises; and he is wife in his dispensations.

Therefore, the the promise as yet appeareth not to accomplished, there is no true cause of trouble of

How to make use of Christ 116 mind, because it shall be afterward fully accomplished: and the wreffling against fin, faith that it is in great measure accomplished already; because, where it hath a fall dominion, it suppresseth all opposition or contradiction, except fome faint reliftance, which a natural conscience, for carnal ends, on carnal principles and grounds, may, now or then, make against this or that particular corruption, which occasioneth shame, difgrace, los, challenges of a carnal conscience, and disquietness that way, when yet it is not hated nor wreftled against as sin, or as a member of the old man, and the body of death. The objecter would confider, that, having subjected his confent to Christ, he is delivered really from that natural State of bondage under fin as a lawful lord, howbeit the old tyrant, now wanting a title, is making new invalions, to trouble the peace and quiet of the foul.

Fourthly, It may be faid, But what can then, in the mean time, keep up the heart of a poor foul from fink-

ing?

Answer. Several things, if rightly considered, might

help to support the foul in this case; as,

I. That they are helped to wreftle against this body of death in all the members of it, so soon as they discover themselves, were it their right-eye, and right-hand.

2. That these lusts gain not ground upon them; or, if they do seem to gain ground, yet they attain not to a full dominion, not gaining their consent.

3. That God is faithful; and therefore the promised victory shall be had in due time, and Satan's head shall

certainly be bruifed.

4. That the wreftling foul is about his duty, carrying as a good foldier of Jesus Christ, fighting the barries of the Lord, and waiting on him in Faith and hope,

But further, fiftbly, some may say, If I were kep from yielding, my wrestling and standing would yiel me some comfort; but, when lust so starten, as the it conceiveth, and bringeth forth sin, Jam. 1. 15. who can support or comfort me then?

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Answer I. Corruption cannot fir in us, but therein we fin; for the very first rife, the motus primo-primi, as they are called, are finful, being contrary to the holy law of God: and the very in-being of that old man, is our fin; for it is finful and rebellious against God, yea, it is very enmity and rebellion itself. When Satan cometh with a temptation from without, he findeth always much in us to entertain the temptation. So that the very ftirring of corruption, which is occafioned by the temptation from without, is our guilt.

2. It is true, it is our duty to fer against the first risings and motions of corruption, when it first enticeth, before it hath conceived or brought forth fin; and it will argue grace in life and in action, to be able to hinder the motions of luft fo far, that it shall not conceive and bring forth fin. Yet we may not fay that there is no grace in the foul, or no measure of mortification attained, where luft sometimes not only enticeth. but conceiveth and bringeth forth fin. The fad experience of many of God's worthies, registrated in the word, cleareth this abundantly. We must not say, Such an one is fallen, therefore he is dead. Paul rea-

foneth otherwise, Rom. 7.

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3. Yet even then, when lust conceiveth and bringeth forth fin, this may comfort and bear up the heart of a poor believer, 1. That the corruption prevail so far, as to bear down all opposition, and run down all that flandeth in its way; yet it getteth not the full confent of the foul: there is still a party for God in the foul, that opposeth so far as to protest against it, or at least to diffent from it, and not to will that which yet is done, and politively to will that which cannot be gotten effectuated. 2. And further, this may bear up the poor foul, that there is a party within, which, the for a time, during the violent overruning of corruption, can do little more than figh and grone in a corner, yet is waiting and longing for an opportunity when it may appear more for God, and against that wicked usurper. 3. So also this may comfort the poor soul, that as it perceivets corruption flirring, and the old man moving one member or other, it runneth away to the King; and when

it is not able to apprehend the traitor, and take him captive to the court of justice, doth there discover the traitor, and tell the King that there is such or such a traitor acting such and such rebellion against him and his laws, and complain, and seek help to take the rebel prisoner, and bring him bound hand and foot to the King, that he may give out sentence against him; that is, when he can do no more against that raging enemy, maketh his complaint to the Lord, and lieth before him, sighing and groning for help and strength to withstand and oppose more this enemy.

Lastly, Some may yet object and say, If it were not worse with me than it is with others, I could then be satisfied; but I see some mightily prevailing over corruption, and I am still at under, and can get no victory:

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and, can I chose but be sad at this?

I answer, 1. Dost thou know for a certainty, that those persons, whose condition thou judgest happy, are altogether free of the inward stirrings of those lusts that thou art brought under by? Or, dost thou know for a certainty, that they are not under the power of some other corruption, as thou thinkest thyself under the power of that corruption whereof thou complaines? What knowest thou then, but they may be as much complaining on other accounts, as thou dost on that?

2. But be it so as thou supposest, that there is a difference betwixt thy condition and the condition of or thers; know it thou not, that all the members of the body are not alike great and firong, as not being equally to be employed in works requiring ftrength? Are there not some young frrong men in Christ's family, and some that are but babes? May not a captain fend fome of his foldiers to one post, where they shall possibly not see the enemy all the day long; and some others to another post, where they shall have no rest all the day? And why, I pray, may not God dispose of his soldiers as he will? he knoweth what he is doing: It is not fafe that every one of the foldiers know what are the defigns of the commander or general; nor is it always fit for us to know or to enquire what may be the defigns of God with us, and what he may be about to do. He may intend

intend to employ one in greater works than another, and so exercise them otherwise for that warfare and work. It may suffice, that the prevailing of others may encourage thee to hope, that at last thy strong corruptions shall also fall by the hand of the same grace of God.

3. If thy fadness favour not of envy and fretting, thou should bless him, that hereby thou art put to the exer-

cife of spiritual forrow.

4. It is well if this bring thee to bless God for the success of others, because hereby his grace is glorified,

I Cor. 12. 26.

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Therefore, 5. Let this satisfy us, that he is the Lord, who doth what he will in heaven and in earth, and may dispose of us as he will, and make of us what he will, for his own glory: and that we are to mind our duty, and be faithful at our post, standing and fighting in the strength of the Lord, resolving never to comply with the enemy; and to rejoice in this, that the enemy is already conquered by the Captain, and that we share in his victory; and that the very God of peace shall quickly bruise satan under our feet, Rom. 16. 20.

## CHAP. VII.

How Christ is to be made use of in reference to growing in grace.

I Come now to speak a little to the other part of fanctification, which concerneth the change of our nature and frame, and is called vivification, or quickning of the new man of grace: which is called the new man, as having all its several members and parts, as well as the old man; and called new, because posterior to the other, and after regeneration is upon the growing hand. This duty of growing in grace, as it is called, a Pet. 3. ult. is variously expressed and held forth to us in scripture: for it is called an abiding and bringing forth fruit in Christ, John 15. 5. adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, &c. 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7. a going on to perfection, Heb. 7. r. a growing up in Christ in

130 How to make use of Christ all things, Epb. 4. 15. a working out our falvation. Phil. 2. 12. a perfecting of holines, 2 Cor. 7. 1. a walking in newnels of life, Rom. 6. 4. a yielding of ourfelves unto God, as alive from the dead, and our members as inftruments of righteoufness unto God, Rom. 6. 13, 18. a bringing forth of fruit unto God, Rom. 7.4. a ferving in newness of spirit, Rom. 7. 6. a being renewed in the spirit of our minds, and a putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteouspels and true holiness, Epb. 4. 23, 24. Col. 3, 10. and the like: some whereof do more immediately express the nature of this change as to the root, and fome as to the fruit and effects thereof, and some the progress and advancement that is made or to be made therein; and all of them point out a special piece of work, which lieth on all that would fee the face of God, viz, to be holy, gracious, and growing in grace.

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This then being a special piece of the exercise and daily work of a Christian, and it being certain, as some of the places now cited do also affirm, that without Christ they cannot get this work either begun or carried on, the main difficulty and question is, How they are

to make use of Christ for this end?

For answer whereunto. Tho, by what we have said in our former discourse, it may be easy to gather what is to be said here; yet I shall briefly put the reader in

mind of those things as useful here.

I. The believer would consider what an ornament this is to the soul, to have on this new man, which is created after the image of God, Epb. 4. 23. what an excellency lieth here, to recover that lost glory, holiness and the image of God; and what advantage the soul reapeth hereby, when it is made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. I.12. and walking worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, Col. I. 10. and strengthned with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, v. II. and when the abounding of the graces of the Spirit maketh them, that they shall meither be harren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord.

Lord Jesus Chrift, 2 Pet. 1.8. and to be a vessel unto bonour, savelified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every work, 2 Tim. 2. 21. What glory and peace is here, to be found obedient unto the many commands given to be holy; what hazard is in the want of holinels, when without it we cannot fee God, Heb. 12. 14. how unanswerable it is unto our profession, who are members to fuch a holy Head, to be unholy; what profir, joy and fatisfaction there is in being remples of the Holy Ghoft, in walking after the Spirit, in bringing forth fruit unto the glory of the Father, &c. The confideration of thefe, and other motives unto this fludy of fanctification, would arm the foul with refolution, and

harden it against opposition.

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2. It would be remembred, that this work, tho it be laid upon us as our duty, and we be called thereunto of God; yet it is beyond our hand and power. It is true, at conversion, the seed of grace is cast into the foul, new habits are infused, a new principle of life is given, the stony heart is changed into an heart of sless; yer these principles and habits cannot act in themselves, or be brought into act by any thing that a believer, confidered in himfelf and without divine help, can do: but this work of fanctification, and growth in grace, must be carried on by divine help, by the Spirit of Jefus dwelling and working within; and therefore it is called the fandification of the Spirit, 2 Theff. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. The God of peace must fanctify us, 1 Thest 5. 23. We are said to be sanctified by God the Father, Jude 1. and by the Holy Ghoft, Rom. 15.16. See also 1 Cor. 6, 11. We would remember, that of ourselves we can do nothing, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and that he must work in us both to will and to do, of bis own good pleasure, Phil. 2. 13. Albeit no believer will question the truth of this, yet it may be it shall be found after trial, that one main cause of their not growing in grace, and making progress in this work, is their not acting as believing this, but fetting about the work as if it were a work which they themselves could master and do without special divine help: therefore the believer would abide, live and act, in the faith of this truth.

3. There-

3. Therefore believers would not, in going about this work, either trust to their own strength, to the habits of grace, to their former experiences, to their knowledge and parts, or the like; nor yet would they truft to any external mean which they are to go about, because the wisdom, strength and help, which their case calleth for, is not to be found in them. should not think of laying these means and duties aside; for then should they fin against God; they should prejudge themselves of the help, strength and supply, which God afeth to convey to the foul in and by the use of the means: and withal, they should not tempt the Lord, by prescribing another way to him than he hath thought good to take. The believer then would use the means and duties prescribed, and that diligently, feriously and constantly; and yer would lean as little to them, and expect help and relief as little from them, as if he were not using them at all, as we faid above, And indeed this would be a right way, yea, the most advantageous and profitable way of going about duties, to be diligent in the use of them, because of God's command; and yet to place our hope and expectation in God alone, and to look above the ordinances for our help.

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4. Albeit it be true, that the power and grace of God, alone, doth begin and carry on this work of fanctification in the foul; yet the he might, did he but fee it for his glory, carry on and finish this work in the foul without the intervention of second causes or means, he hath notwithstanding thought it fit, for the glory of his name, to work this work by means, and particularly by believers fetting about the work: he worketh not in man as if he were a block or a stone, but useth him as a rational creature, endued with a rational foul, having useful and necessary faculties, and having a body fitted by organs to be subservient to the soul in its actions. Therefore the believer must not think to ly by and do nothing; for he is commanded to work out his own falvation, and that because it is God that worketh in him both to will and to do: Because God worketh

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all, therefore he should work; to reasoneth the Apostle: so that God's working is an argument and motive to the man to work, and not an argument to him to ly by idle; and do nothing. And here is the holy art and divine skill requifite in this bufiness, to wit, for the believer to be as diligent and active as if he could bring forth fruit in his own strength, and by his own working; and yet to be as abstracted from himself, his own grace, ability, knowledge and experience, in his working, as if he were lying by like a mere block, and only moving as

moved by external force.

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5. The foul that would make progress in Christianity. and grow in grace, would remember, that Christ is proposed to us as a copy which we are to imitate; and that therefore we should set Christ continually before us as our pattern, that we may follow his steps, I Pet. I. 15. & 2.21. But withal it would be remembred, that he is not like other ensamples or copies, that can help the man that imitateth them no other way than by their objective prospect: for looking by faith on this copy, will bring vertue to the man that studieth to imitate, whereby he shall be enabled to follow his copy the better. O if we knew in experience what this were, to take a look of Christ's love, patience, long-suffering, meekness, hatred of sin, zeal, &c. and by faith to pore in, till, by vertue proceeding from that copy, we found our hearts in some measure framed into, the same dispofition, or at least more inclined to be cast into the same mould!

6. The believer would act faith on Christ as the head of the body, and as the flock in which the branches are ingrafted, and thereby fuck fap and life and firength from him, that he may work, walk and grow as becometh a Christian. The believer must grow up in him, being a branch in him, and must bring forth fruit in him, as the forementioned places clear. Now, Christ himself tells us, that the branches cannot bring forth fruit except they abide in the vine, and that no more can his disciples bring forth except they abide in him, John 15. Therefore, as it is by faith that the foul as a branch is united to Christ as the vine, and as it is by

How to make use of Christ faith that they abide in him; fo it is by faith that they must bring forth fruit: and this faith must grip Christ as the vine, and the flock or root, from which cometh Tap, life and firength. Faith then muft look to Chrift as the fountain of furniture, as the head, from whence cometh all the influences of firength and motion. hath strength and life enough to give out, for the fulness of the Godbead dwelleth in him bodily; and he is also willing enough to communicate of his fulness, as the relations he hath taken on do witness. The head will not grudge to give to the members of the body, spirits for action and motion; nor will a vine grudge to give fap unto the branches: nay, life, firength and furniture will (as it were) natively flow out of Christ unto believers, except they through unbelief, and other diffempers, cause obstructions; as life and sap doth natively and kindly flow from the root to the branches, or from the head to the members, unless obstructions stop the passage. It is necessary therefore, that believers eye Christ under these and the like relations, and look upon him as flanding (to speak fo) obliged by his place and relation, to grant firength and influences of life, whereby they may become fruitful in every good work; and fo with holy, humble and allowed boldness, press in faith for new communications of grace, vertue, firength, courage, activity, and what elfe they need: for from the head all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministred, increaseth with the increase of God, Col. 2. 19. Epb. 4. 16.

7. For this cause, believers would ly open unto the influences of Christ, and guard against the putting of obstructions in the way, thro' grieving of the Spirit, by which he conveyeth and communicateth those influences unto the soul; and thro' questioning and misbelieving Christ's faithfulness, and unchangeable willingness, which as a violent humour stoppeth the passage. So then believers would ly open, by looking and waiting, drawing, seeking from him what they need, and by guarding against every thing that may provoke the Lord to anger, whether in omission or commission. Here is requisite an holy, humble, sober and watchful walk

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walk, an earnest, serious and hungry looking out to him, and a patient waiting for supply and surniture from him. This is to open the mouth wide, that he may fill it; to ly before the Sun of rightcousness, that the beams thereof may beat upon them, and warm and revive them; and to wait as a beggar at this King's gate,

till he give the alms.

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8. For the strengthning of their hope and faith in this. they would lay hold upon Christ dying, and by his death purchasing all those influences of life and strength which are requifite for carrying on of the work of grace and fanctification in the foul: for we must be bleffed in Chrift with all spiritual bleffings, Eph. 1. 2. The believer then would look on these influences as purchased at a dear rate by the blood of Jesus Christ; so that the divine power giveth unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that bath called us to glory and virtue, 2 Pet. 1. 3. And this will encourage the foul to wait ou, and expect the flowing down of influences, and spiritual bleffings and showers of grace, to cause the soul to flourish and become fruitful; and to urge and press more earnestly, by faith, the bestowing of the purchased benefits.

9. Moreover, the believer would look on Jefus as flanding engaged and obliged to carry on this work. Both receiving them, as for this end, from the Father; hence we are said to be chosen in bim before the foundation of the world, that we fould be boly, &c. Epb. 1. 4. and as dying for them; for be gave bimfelf for the church, that he might fanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to bimfelf a glorious church, that it should be boly, Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. He hath reconciled them, in the body of bis flest through death, to prefent them boly, Col. 1. 22. So that the noble covenant of redemption may found the certain hope and expectation of the believer, upon a double account: First, upon the account of the Father's faithfulness, who promised a feed to Jesus, viz. such as should be his Children, and so be sanctified thro him; and that the pleasure of the Lord, which in part is the work of fanctification, should prosper in his hand And, next, upon the account of Christ's undertaking.

and engaging, as is said, to bring his sons and daughters to glory; which must be thro sanctification, for without holiness no man shall see God. And they must look like himself, who is a holy Head, a holy Husband, a holy Captain; and therefore they must be holy members, a holy spouse, and holy soldiers. So that he standeth engaged to sanctify them by his Spirit and word; and therefore is called the sanctifier, Heb. 2. 11. for both be that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one. Yea, their union with Christ layeth the foundation of this; for, being joined to the Lord, they become one Spirit, I Cor. 6. 17. and are animated and quickned by one and the same Spirit of life and grace; and therefore must be sanctified by that Spirit.

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10. The believer likewise would act faith upon the promises of the new covenant, of grace, strength, life, &c. whereby they shall walk in his ways, have God's laws put into their minds, and writ into their hearts, Heb 8. 10. Fer 31, 33. and of the new heart, and new spirit, and the heart of flesh, and the Spirit within them to cause them walk in his ways or statutes, and keep his judgments and do them, Ezek 36. 26, 27. and the like, wherewith the scripture aboundeth: Because thefe are all given over to the believer by way of testament and legacy, Christ becoming the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inberitance, Heb. 9. 15. Now, Christ by his death bath confirmed this testament : for, where a seffament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, v. 16, 17. Christ then dying, to make the testament of force, hath made the legacy of the promises fure unto the believer; so that now all the promises are yea and amen in Chrift, 2 Cor. 1. 20. He was made a minifter of circumcision, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, Rom, 15. 8. That the eying of these promises by faith is a noble mean to fanctification, is clear by what the apostic faith, 2 Gor. 7. 1. Having therefore thefe promises, let us cleanse ourselves --- perfecting boliness in the fear of God. And for growth in grace.

And it is by faith that those promises must be received, Heb. 11.33. So that the believer, that would grow in grace, would eye Christ the fundamental promise, the testator establishing the testament, and the executor or dispensator of the covenant, and expect the good things thro' him and from him, thro' the conduit and

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11. Yet further, believers would eye Christ in his referrection, as a publick person, and so look on themfelves and reekon themselves as rising virtually in and with him, and take the refurrection of Christ as a certain pawn and pledge of their fanctification: for fo reafoneth the apostle, Rom. 6. 4, 5, 8, 11, 13. We are buried (fays he) with bim by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so also we sould walk in newness of life. we shall be planted also in the likeness of his resurrection. And if we be dead with Chrift, we believe that we ball also live with bim. - Therefore reckon ye also yourselves to be- - alive unto God through Fefus Christ our Lord. And yield yourselves unto God, as these that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. The right improving of this ground would be of noble advantage unto the fludent of holiness: for then he might with flrong confidence conclude that the work of fanctification should prosper in his hand; for he may now look upon himself as quickned together with Chrift, Eph. 2. 5. Chrift dying and rifing as a publick person, and he by faith being now joined with him; and united to him.

12. Moreover, this refurrection of Christ may yield us another ground of hope and considence in this work; for there is mention made of the power of his resurrection, Phil. 3. 10. So that by faith we may draw strength and vertue from Christ, as an arisen and quickned head, whereby we also may live unto God, and bring forth fruit unto him, and serve no more in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit, Rom. 7. 4, 6. He was quickned as an head; and, when the head is quickned, the members cannot but look for

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How to make use of Christ

she firength of the life of the head. See Col. 3. 1, 2.

12. Faith may and should also look to Christ, as an intercessor with the Father, for this particular, John 17. 17. Sandify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. And this will add to their considence, that the work shall go on; for Christ was always heard of the Father, John 11. 41, 42, and so will be in this prayer, which

was not put up for the few disciples alone.

The believer then would eye Christ as engaging to the Father to begin and perfect this work; as dying to purchase the good things promised, and to confirm the fame; as quickned, and rifing as head and publick perfon to infure this work and to bestow and actually confer the graces requifite; and as praying also for the Father's concurrence; and cast the burden of the work on him by faith, knowing that he flandeth obliged, by his place and relation to his people, to bear all their burdens, to work all their works in them, to perfect his own work that he hath begun in them, to present them to himself at last a holy bride, to give them the Spirit to devell in them; Rom. 8. 9, 11. and to quicken their mortal bodies, v. II. and to lead them, v. I4. till at length they be crowned, and brought forward to glory. This is to live by faith; when Christ liverly, acteth and worketh in us by his Spirit, Gal. 2. 22. Thus Chrift. dwelletb in the beart by faith: and by this his pepole become rooted and grounded in love, which is a cardinal grace; and knowing the Love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, they become filled with all the fulness of God, Eph. 3. 17, 19. So that the believer is to commit by faith the work to Christ, and leave the stress of all the business on him, who is their life. Yet the believer must not think to do nothing, nor to lay aside the means and ordinances, but, using these diligently, would in them commit the matter to Christ, and by faith roll the whole work on him, expecting, upon the ground of his relations, engagements, promifes, beginnings, 86. that he will certainly perfect the work, Pbil. 1. 6. and take it well off their hands, and be well pleased with them

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their for putting the work in his hands, and leaving it on him, who is made of God to as Santification.

CAUTIONS.

As in the former part, so here, it will not be smile to give a few words of caution, for preventing of mistakes.

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1. We would beware of thinking that perfection can be attained here. The perfect man, and measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, is but coming; and, till then, the body will be a perfecting and edifying, thro' the work of the ministry, Epb. 4. 12, 13. Believers must not chink of firring down on any measure of grace which they actain to here; but they must be growing in grace, going from frength to firength, till they appear in the upper Zion: with the apostle, Phil. 3. 13. forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, they must press toward. the mark, for the prize of the bigh calling of God in Christ Jesus. It must then be a dreadful delusion, for any to think that they can reach to fuch a degree of perfection here, as not to fland in need of the ordinances any more. Let all believers live in the conflant conviction of their short-coming, and be humbled, and fo work out their falvation with fear and trembling.

2. Nor flould every believer expect one and the fame measure of holiness; nor can it be expected with reason that all shall advance here to the same height of fanctity: for every part of the body hath its own meafure, and an effectual working in that measure; and fo every joint of the body supplieth less or more according to its proportion, and contributeth to the increase of the body, and to the edifying of itself in love, as the apostle clearly showeth, Epb. 4. 16. As, in the natural body, the divertity of functions and uses of the members requireth divertity of furniture and strength; fo, in the myffical body of Christ, the members have not all a like measure, but each harh his proper distinct meafore, according to his place and ufefulness in the body. Believers then would learn much fobriery here, and fubmission, knowing that God may dispense his graces as he will, and give them to each member in what measure he

thinketh

thinketh good: only they would take heed, that their poverty and leanness be not occasioned thro their own carelesness and negligence, in not plying the means of grace with that faithfulness and single dependence on

Christ that they ought.

3. It would be remembred, that there may be some progress made in the way of holiness, when yet the believer may apprehend no such thing; not only because the measure of the growth may be so small and indiscernible, but also because, even where the growth in itself is discernible, the Lord may think it good for wise ends to hide it from their eyes, that they may be kept humble and diligent; whileas, if they saw how matters shood indeed with them, they might (without a new degree of grace) swell and be pussed up, yea, even sorget God, and misken themselves and others too. Likewise this may proceed from such an earnest defire after more, that they forger any measure they have gotten, and so despite the day of small things.

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4. There may be a progress in holiness, tho not in that particular which the believer is most eyeing to his sense and apprehension: for, when he thinks he is not growing in love to and zeal for God, &c. he may be growing in humility, which is also a member of the new man of grace; and, when he can perceive no growth in knowledge, there may be a growth in affection and tenderness. And, if the work be carried on in any joint or member, it decayeth in none, tho it may be

better apprehended in one than in another.

5. There may be much holiness where the believer is complaining of the want of fruits, when, under that dispensation of the Lord towards him, he is made to stoop before the most High, to put his mouth in the dust if so be there may be hope, and pleasantly to submit to God's wise ordering, without grudging or quarrelling with God for what he doth, and to accept sweetly the punishment of his iniquity, if he see guilt lying at the root of this dispensation. Where there is a silent sub mission to the sovereign and only wise disposing hand a God, and the man is saying, If he will not have me to be a fruitful tree in his garden, nor to grow and flouris

for growth in grace.

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as the palm-tree, let me be a shrub, only let me be kept within the precincts of his garden, that his eye may be upon me for good; let me abide within his courts, that I may behold his countenance; there is grace, and no small measure of grace. To be an hired servant is much, Luke 15. 19.

6. But withal, it would be observed, that this gracious frame of soul, that is filent before God under several disappointments, is accompanied with much single-ness of heart, in panting after more holiness, and, with seriousness and diligence in all commanded duties, waiting upon the Lord, who is their hope and their falvation, in each of them; and with mourning for their own finful accession to that shortcoming in their ex-

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7. We would not think that there is no progress in Christianity, or growth in grace, because it cometh not our way, or by the instruments and means that we most expect it by. Possibly we are too fond on some instruments and means, that we prefer to others; and we think, if ever we get good, it must be that way, and by that means, be it private or publick; and God may give a proof of his sovereignty, and check us for our folly, by taking another way. He would not be sound of the Bride, neither by her seeking of him secretly on her bed by night, nor more publickly by going about the city, in the streets and broad ways; nor by the means of the watchmen, Cant. 3. 1, 2, 3.

8. Nor would we think that there is no growth in the work of grace, because it cometh not at such or such a prelimited or fore-set time; nor would we think the matter desperate, because of our looking long, and waiting, and asking, and labouring, and yet seeing no sensible advantage. Such and such a believer (saith the soul) made great progress in a short time; but I come no speed, for as long as I have been at this school. O! we should beware of limiting the holy One of Israel. Let

us be at duty, and commit the event to him.

9. It is not a fit time to take the measure of our graces as to their sensible growth and fruitfulness, when devils are broken loose upon us, temptations are multiplied,

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corruptions make a great noise, and we are meeting with an horrible tempest shaking us on all hands: for it will be strong grace, that will much appear then; it will be a strong faith, that will say, Though be kill me, yet will I trust in him. At such a time it will be much if the man keep the ground he hath gained, tho he make no progress: it will be much for a tree to stand, and not be blown our of the ground, in the time of a strong and vehement storm of wind, tho it keep not its sloutishes, and yield not fruit. The trees, which in a cold winter-day bear neither leaves nor fruit, must not be said to go back, nor not to grow, because when the spring cometh again they may revive and be as fruitful

10. We would not alway measure our graces by what appeareth outwardly; for there may be some accidental occurrence that may hinder that, and yet grace be at work within doors, which sew or none can observe. The believer may be in a sweet and gracious frame, blushing before the Lord, yea, melting in love, or taken up with spiritual meditations and wondring, when as to some external duties it can find no present disposition, throsome accidental impediment or other; so that to some, who judge most by outward appearance, no such thing as the active working of grace in life can appear.

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11. We would think it no small measure or degree of holiness, to be with singleness of heart pursuing it, even the it should seem to see from us; to be earnestly panting after it, and hungring and thirsting for it. No-bemiab thought this no small thing, when he said, Neb. 1. 11. O Lord, I befeech thee, let now thine ear be attention to the prayer—of thy servants, who desire to fear

thy name.

12. Whatever measure of holiness the believer winto, he would take special heed that he place no part of his considence of his being accepted and justified before God, in it; as if that could come in as any part of the price to satisfy justice: but, when he hath done all, le him call and account himself an unprofitable servant Tho' believers will not be so gross as to speak thus, you ture their justifying of their holding a-back from God, be can

taufe they find not such a measure of grace and holiness as they would have, looketh too much this way, and faith, that they lean too much hereunto in the matter of the acceptance of their persons before God. Now, this would be specially guarded against, lest their labour be in vain.

Objections answered.

An objection or two must here also be removed. And, first, some may say, That the they may have been labouring and striving and working now for some long time, yet they can perceive no advancement, they are as far short as ever.

Anf. 1. Hath it not been found, that some have complained without cause? have not some complained of their fruitlesness and want of growth, that other good Christians would have thought themselves very happy if they had but advanced half so far as they saw them to

have done ?

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2. But be it so as it is alledged, what if the fault be their own? what if the cause of this be, that they attempt things in their own strength, leaning to their own understanding, or habits of grace, or means, &c. and that they do not go about duties with that single dependence on Christ that is requisite, nor do they suck life, strength and sap from him by faith thro the promises, nor give themselves up to him by faith, that he may work in them both to will and to do? Should not this be seen, mourned for, and helped?

3. If all this shortcoming and disappointment cause them ly in the dust, and humble themselves more and more before the Lord, the grace of humility is growing; and that is no small advantage, to be growing

downward.

4. Withal, they would do well to hold on in duty, ooking to Christ for help, and rolling all difficulties in him, give themselves away to him as their Head and ord, and so continue their life of faith, or their continuing to let Christ live in them by faith, or work in hem by his Spirit what is well-pleasing in his fight, and alt for the blessing and fruit in God's own time.

Next, It will be obj Hed, Tho we might wait thus,

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yer, how unedifying are we unto others, when there

appeareth no fruit of the Spirit of grace in us?

Ans. A christian behaviour and deportment under the sense of fruitlesness, expressing an holy submission of soul unto God as Sovereign, much humility of mind before him, justifying of God and taking guilt to themselves, with a firm resolution to wait on patiently in the use of means appointed, cannot but be edifying to christian souls; such exercises being really the works and fruit of the Spirit of grace working within.

But, Thirdly, Some may fay, How are then the pro-

miles of the covenant made good?

Anf. 1. The same measure of sanctification and holi-

ness is not promised to all.

2. No great measure is promised to any absolutely. So much indeed is secured to all believers as shall carry them to heaven, as without which they cannot see God; but much as to the degree depends on our performing thro' faith the conditions requisite, to wit, on condition of our abiding in the vine, of our acting faith on him, &c. and, when these and the like conditions are not faithfully performed by us, what can we expect? So the Lord hath appointed a way wherein he will be found, and will have us to wait for strength and influence from him; and, if we neglect these means which he hath appointed, how can we expect the good which he hath promised in the use of these means?

3. The Lord hath his own time of making good all his promises, and we must not limit him to a day.

4. Hereby the Lord may be trying and exercifing thy faith, patience, hope, dependence, submission, diligence, &c. and, if these be in thee and abound, they shall make that thou shalt neither be barren nor unstruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1-11.

But, Laftly, It will be enquired, What can support

the believing foul in this cafe?

Ans. 1. The confideration and faith of the covenant of redemption, wherein both the Father's engagement to the Son, and the Son's engagement to the Father secureth grace and holiness, and salvation to the believer. And, whatever we be, they will be true to each

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2. The confideration of the noble and faithful promifes contained in the covenant of grace, which shall be

all made good in due time.

2. If we be humbled under the fense of our failings and shortcomings, and made to mourn before the Lord, flirred up to more diligence and seriousness, that may yield comfort to our foul. If we be growing in humility, godly forrow, repentance, diligence, and be gripping fatter by faith to the root, we want not ground of joy and support; for, if that be, we cannot want fruit.

4. It should be matter of joy and thanksgiving, that the believer is kept from turning his back on the way of God, and kept with his face still Zion-ward: the he make but little progress, yet he is fill looking forward, and creeping as he may, waiting at God's door, begging and asking, studying, labouring, and endeavouring for

firength to go fafter.

5. It is no small matter of peace and comfort, if we be kept from fretting, grudging and repining at the Lord's dispensations with us, and be taught to fit filent in the dust, adoring his sovereignty, and ascribing no iniquity to our Maker.

## CHAP. VIII.

How to make use of Christ for taking the guilt of our daily out-breakings away.

THE next part of our fanctification is in reference to our daily failings and transgressions, committed, partly thro' the violence of temptations, as we fee in David and Peter, and other eminent men of God; partly thro' daily infirmities, because of our weakness and imperfections: for in many things we offend all, am. 3. 2. And if we say sue bave no fin, we deceive ourelves, and the truth is not in us, I John 1. 8. A righteus man falleth seven times, Prov. 24. 16. There is not just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not,

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How to make use of Christ. Ecel. 7. 20. And Solomon further faith, 1. Kings 8. 46 that there is no man that finneth not. This being to, the question is, How Christ is to be made use of for taking of these away?

For fatisfaction to this, it would be confidered, that in those daily out-breakings there are two things to be noticed: Fire, There is the guilt, which is commonly called reatus pone, whereby the transgressor is liable to the fentence of the law, or to the penalty annexed to the breach thereof, which is no less than God's curse: for, Curfed is every one that abideth not in all things which are in the law to do them, Gal. 3. 10. Next, There is the flain or blot, which is called reatus culpa, whereby the foul is defiled, and made in so far incapable of glory (for nothing entreth in there which defileth) and of communion and fellowship with God, who is of purer eyes than he can behold iniquity. So that it is manifest, how necessary it is that both these be taken away, that they may not stand in our way to the Father. to both we must make use of Christ, who is the only way to the Father.

And this we shall now clear: and, first, speak of the taking away of the guilt that is contracted by every fin. And, for this cause, we shall briefly speak to two things; i. Shew what Christ hath done as Mediator, for this end, that the guilt contracted by our daily failings and out-breakings might be taken away. 2. Shew what the believer should do for the gerting of guilt taken away in Christ; or how he should make use of Christ for reconciliation with God after transgressions, or for the taking away of the guilt that he lieth under because

of his violation of the law.

As to the first, We say, Christ, for taking away of guilt contracted daily, hath done these things;

I. Christ laid down his life a ransom for all the fine of the elect; both fuch as were past before they believed and fuch as were to be committed after. His blood was shed for the remission of sins indefinitely, and with out distinction, Mat. 26. 28.

2. And this was done according to the tenor of the covenant of redemption, wherein the Father caused a

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our fine to meet together on him, Ita. 52. 6. and made him fin, or a facrifice for fin, indefinitely, 2 Cor. 5. 21. and so did not except the fins committed after conversion.

3. Having satisfied justice, and being risen from the dead as a Conqueror, he is now exalted to be a Prince. to give repentance and remission of sins, Acts 5. 31. Now, repentance and remission of sins his people have need of

after conversion, as well as before conversion.

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4. There are promifes of pardon and remission of fins in the new covenant of grace, all which are sealed and confirmed in the blood of Jesus; Jer. 31. 34.—
For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. And, Chap. 33. 8. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me: and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Isa. 43. 25. I, even I, am he that blotteth out they transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

5. Tho there be no actual pardon of fins till they be committed, and repented of, according to the tenor of the gospel, Mat. 2. 2. Luke 13. 3. Acts 2. 38. & 8. 22. yet, while Christ bare all the sins of his people upon the cross, they were all then virtually and meritoriously taken away: of which Christ's resurrection was a certain pledge and evidence; for then got he his acquittance from all that either law or justice could charge him with, in behalf of them for whom he laid down his life a ransom, Rom. 8. 33, 34. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, or rather that is risen again, &cc.

6. So that, by vertue of Christ's death, there is a way laid down, in the covenant of grace, how the fins of the elect shall be actually pardoned, viz. That, at their conversion and first laying hold on Christ by faith, all the sins whereof they then stand guilty shall be actually pardoned and forgiven, in their justification; and all their after-sins shall also be actually pardoned, upon their gripping to Christ of new by faith, and turning to

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God by repentance. And this way is agreed to by Father and Son, and revealed in the gospel, for the infiruction and encouragement of believers; and all to the glory of his free grace. In whom we have redemption (saith the apostle, Eph. 1.7, 8, 9.) through his blood, the forgiveness of Sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence, Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in

bimfelf.

7. Beside Christ's death and resurrection, which give ground of hope of pardon of daily outbreakings, there is likewife his intercession useful for this end: for faith the apostle, 1 John 2. 1, 2. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our fins. This intercession of his is a special part of his Priesthood, who was the great high Prieft, Heb. 4. 14, 16. and a compleating part, Heb. 8. 4. & 9. 8. and upon this account it is, that be is able to fave to the uttermost all that come to God through bim, because be liveth for ever to make intercession for them, Heb. 7. 25. for by his intercession is the work of redemption carried on, the purchased benefits applied; and particularly new grants of remission are thro' his intercession issued forth: he pleading and interceeding, in a way fuitable to his glorified condition, upon his death and propitiation made while he was upon the cross, accepted of the Father, and declared to be accepted by his refurrection, afcension, and sitting at the Father's right-hand. And thus, as believers are reconciled to God by Christ's death, they are saved by his life, Rom. 5. 10. So that Christ's living for to be an intercessor, makes the believer's falvation fure; and fo layeth down a ground for taking away of daily outbreakings, which, if not taken away, would hinder and obstruct the believer's falvation.

8. And as for the condition requisite to renewed pardon, wiz. faith and repentance, Christ is the worker of both; for he is a Prince exalted to give repentance, first and last, Als 4. 30, and as he is the author of faith, so

he is the finisher of it, Heb. 12. 2.

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As to the fecond particular, namely, What believers should do for getting the guilt of their daily failings and outbreakings taken away by Christ? or how they should make use of Christ for this end? I shall, for clearing of it, propose those things to consideration.

1. We would beware to think, that all our after actual transgressions are actually pardoned, either when Christ died, or when we first believed in Christ, as fome suppose; for fin cannot properly be faid to be pardoned before it be committed. David was put to fue out for pardon after his actual transgression was committed, and not for the mere fense and feeling of the pardon, or the intimation of it to his spirit, when he cried out, Pfal. 51. 2 .- Blot out my transgressions, was me, &c. And v. 9. Hide thy face from my fins, and blot out all mine iniquities. And v. 14. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness. Sure, when he spoke thus, he sought some other thing than intimation of pardon to his fense and conscience; for that he defired also, but in far more clear expressions, v. 8. Make me to bear joy and gladness, &c. and v. 12. Restore unto me the joy of thy Salvation, &c. Scripture-phrases to express remission import this, viz. Covering of fin, pardoning of debts, blotting out of fins, biding of God's face from fins, not semembring of them, casting of them behind his back, casting of them into the sea, removing of sins, Pfal. 103. 12. a lifting off of fin, or taking it away, a non-imputation of fin, Pfal. 32, 1, 2. These and the like phrases, tho many of them be metaphorical, yet do all of them clearly evince that fin must first have a being before it can be pardoned. The fame is clearly imported by the gospel-conditions requifite before pardon, such as acknowledgment of fin, 1 John 1. 9. which we see was practifed by the worthies of old, David, Pfal. 32. 51. Nebemiah, chap. 9 Ezra, chap. 9. and Daniel, chap. 9. Confessing, and forsaking of it, Prov. 28, 13. Sorrowing for it, and repenting of it, and laying hold on Christ by faith, &c.

The reason why I propose this, is not only to guard against this Antinomian error, but also to guard the soul from security, to which this doctrine hath a natural tendency: for if a person once think that all his sins

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were pardoned upon his first believing, so that many of them were pardoned before they were committed; he shall never be affected for his after-transgressions, nor complain of a body of death, nor account himself miserable upon that account, as Paul did, Rom. 7, 24, nor shall he ever pray for remission, the Christ hath taught all to do so, in that pattern of prayer; nor shall he act saith upon the promises of pardon made in the covenant of grace for after-transgressions, or for transgressions actually committed, Fer. 31, 34 & 23, 8. Heb. 8, 12, and so there shall be no use made of Christ for new pardons, or remissions of new sins.

2. The believer would remember, that, among other things antecedently requifite to remission of posterior actual transgressions, gospel-repentance is especially required, Luke 13, 3. Mat. 3. 2. Ezek. 18. 28, 30, 32. Luke 15. 17, 18. Hof. 2. 6, 7. Ezek. 14. 6. whereby a finner, thro the help of the Spirit, being convinced not only of his hazard by reason of fin, but also of the filthiness and hatefulness of sin; and having a fight of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus to sinners, turning from their fin; doth turn from those fins unto God, with a full purpose of heart, in his strength, to follow him and obey his laws: and hereby the foul is brought to lothe itself and fin, and is made willing to defire, feek for, accept of, and prize remission of sins. This makes them more warry in time coming, and careful: For behold (fays the Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. 11.) this felf-same thing that ye forrowed after a godly fort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourfeldes; what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement defire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge, &c. Thus is God glorified in his justice, Pfal. 51. 4. and his mercy is acknowledged; in not entring with us into judgment, nor casting us into hell, as he might have done in jus flice.

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3. Yet it would be remembred, that the it hath feemed good in the Lord's eyes to chuse this method, and appoint this way of obtaining pardon of fins daily committed, for the glory of his grace and mercy, and likewise for our good; we must not ascribe too much unto

unto repentance, in the matter of pardon; we must not make it a cause of our remission, either efficient or meritorious; we must not think that it hath any hand in appealing the wrath of God, or in satisfying of justice. Pardon must always be an act of God's free grace, unmerited at our hands, and procured alone thro the merits of Christ. We must not put repentance in Christ's room and place, nor ascribe any impersection unto his merits, as if they needed any supply from any act of ours: we must beware of leaning to our repentance and godly sorrow, even so far as to think to commend ourselves to God thereby, that we may obtain pardon.

4. The believer would consider seriously the dreadfulness of their condition who are lying under the lash
of the law for sin. The law saith, Gursed is every one
that continueth not in all things written in the law: and
every sin is a transgression of the law; so that, according
to law and justice, they are in hazard: for every sin in
itself exposeth the sinner to eternal wrath, sin being an
offence against God who is a righteous judge, and a
breach of his law. A right sight and apprehension of
this would serve to humble the sinner before God, and
make him more earness in seeking out for pardon, that

this obligation to punishment might be removed.

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5. The believer would not only confider the fin itself. but also take notice of all its aggravations. There are peculiar aggravations of fome fins, taken from the time. manner and other circumstances, which rightly confidered will help forward the work of humiliation: and the fins of believers have this aggravation above the fins of others, that they are committed against more love. and special love, and against more opposition and contradiction of the grace of God within the foul, against more light and conviction, &c. and therefore their humiliation upon this account ought to be fingular and ferious. So was it with David, when he took notice of the special aggravation of his fin, Pfal. 51.4, 6, 14. & Ezra, Chap. 9. & Nebemiab, Chap. 9. & Daniel, Chap. 9. This confidering of fin, with its due aggravations, would help to prize mercy at an high rate, and cause the foul more

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more willingly wait for and more seriously seek after remission; knowing that God is more angry for great fins than for sins of infirmity, and may therefore pursue the same with sorer judgments, as he broke Davia's

bones, withdrew his comforts, &c.

6. The believer would be convinced of an impossibility of doing any thing in himself which can procure pardon at the hands of God. Should he weep, cry, afflict himself, and pray never so, all will do nothing by way of merit for the taking away of the least fin that ever he committed; and the conviction of this would drive him to despair in himself, and be a mean to bring him cleanly off himself, and to look out for mere mercy in Christ-Jesus. So long as, thro' the deceitfulness of Satan, the false heart inclineth to the old biass, and hath its eye upon any thing in itself from whence it draweth its hopes and expectation of pardon and acceptance, it will not purely act faith on Christ for this end; and so he will lose all his labour, and in end be disappointed. Therefore the believer would guard against this, and that so much the more that the false deceitful heart is fo much inclined thereto, and that this deceit can sometime work so cunningly that it can hardly be discerned, being fairded over with many false glosses and pretexts; and that it is so dishonourable to Jesus, and hurtful and prejudicial to the foul.

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7. The believer would act faith on the promises of pardon in the new covenant, as having a right to them thro' Jesus Christ, and challenge with humble boldness the fulfilling of the same, according to that, I John 1.9. If we confess our sins, be is faithful and just to for give us our sins. So that the believer may not only take hold of mercy and grace in God, as an encouragement and invitation to go to God for pardon; but even of the justice and righteousness of God, because of his faithful promises: and the believer would have here a special eye to Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen; and look for the accomplishment of them thro'

him, and for his fake alone.

S. Faith would eye Christ as hanging upon the cross, and offering up himself, through the eternal Spirit, a facrifice

for taking away saily guilt.

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facrifice to fatisfy divine justice for all the fins of his own chosen ones. We cannot think that Christ bare but some of their fins, or only their fins committed before conversion; and if he bare all, as the Father laid all upon him, the believer is to lay hold on him by faith, as hanging on the cross, as well for taking away of the guilt of fins committed after conversion, as before. His facrifice was a facrifice for all; and be bare our sins, without distinction or exception, in his own body on the tree, I Pet, 2. 24. David had his eye on this, when he cried out, Psal. 51. 7. Purge me with by sop; hystop being sometimes used in the legal purifications, which typisted that purification which Christ really wrought when he gave himself a facrifice for fin, Lev. 14. 6. Num. 19. 18.

9. The believer looking on Christ dying as a Mediator, to pacify the wrath of God, and to make fatiffaction to the justice of God for the fins of his people, would renew his confent unto that gracious and wife contrivance of heaven, of pardoning fins through a crucified Mediator, that mercy and justice might kiss each other, and be glorified together; and declare again his full satisfaction with Christ's satisfying of justice for him, and taking away the guilt of his fins by that blood that was fled upon the crofs, by taking those fins whereof now he standerh guilty, and for which he is desirous of pardon, and by faith nailing them to the cross of Christ, and rolling them on his shoulders, that the guilt of them, as well as of the reft, might be taken away, thro' the merits of his death and fatisfaction. the believer confenteth to that noble act of free grace, whereby the Lord made all our fins to meet together on Christ, when he taketh those particular fins, wherewith now he is troubled, and cafferh them in into the heap, that Christ, as the true scape-got, may carry all away. This is to lay our hands on the head of our lacrifice.

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10. The believer hath another ground of comfort to grip to in this case, and that is, Christ's eternal Priest-hood, whereby he makes intercession for the transgressions of his people, and, as their advocate and attorney with the Father, pleadeth their cause; whereby he is

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How to make use of Christ
able to save them to the last, and uttermost step of their
journey, and so to save them from the guilt of all casual and emergent sine that might hinder their salvation:
so that the believer is to put those sins, that now he would
have pardoned, into the hands of Christ, the everlasting
intercesser and all-sufficient advocate, that he, by vertue of his death, would obtain a new pardon of these
their failings and transgressions, and deliverance from
the guilt thereof; and their acceptance with the Father

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12. The

notwithstanding of these transgressions. 11. Thus believers eying Christ as dying, riling again, ascending, and as sitting at the Father's right-hand, there to be a Prieft for ever after the order of Melchifedek, and to interceed for his own, and to fee to the application of what benefits, pardons, favours, and other things they need (from all which they have strong ground of comfort and of hope, yea, and affurance of pardon) would acquiesce in this way; and having laid those particular fins, under the burden whereof they now grone, on Christ the Mediator, dying on the cross to make fatisfaction, and arising to make application of what was purchased, and having put them in his hand, who is a faithful high Priest, and a noble Intercellor, would remember, that Christ is a Prince exalted, to give vepentance and remission of fins : and so expect the fentence even from him, as a Prince new exalted, and as having obtained that of the Father, even a power to forgive lins, juffice being now fufficiently fatisfied thro' his death; yea, and as having all power in heaven and in earth, as being Lord both of the dead and of the living. Sure a right thought of this would much quiet the foul, in hope of obraining pardon thro' him; feeing now the pardon is in his own hand, to give out, who loved them to dearly, that he gave himself to the death for them, and shed his heart-blood to satisfy justice for their transgressions. Since he, who hath procured their pardon at To dear a rate, and is their attorney to agent their bufiness at the throne of grace, bath now obtained the prayedfor and looked-for pardon, and hath it in his own hand, they will not question but he will give it, and so absolve them from their guilt.

for taking away daily gulh.

12. The believer having taken this course with his daily provocations, and laid them all on him, would acquietee in this way, and not seek after another, that he may obtain pardon. Here he would reft, committing the matter by faith in prayer to Christ, and, leaving his guilt and fins on him, expect the pardon; yea, conclude that they are already pardoned, and that for these fins he shall never be brought into condemnation, whatever saturn and a misbelieving heart may say or suggest afterward.

Thus should a believer make use of Christ for the taking away of the guilt of his daily transgressions; and, for further clearing of it, I shall add a few cautions.

CAUTIONS.

1. However the believer is to be much moved at. and affected with, his fins and provocations which he committeeth after God hath vifited his foul with falvation, and brought him into a covenant with himself: yet he must not suppose that his sins after justification do mar his state, as if thereby he were brought into a non-justified state, or to a non-reconciled state. It is true, fuch fins, especially if gross, whether in themselves, or by reason of circumstances, will darken a man's flate, and put him to fearch and try his condition over again: but yet we dare not fay that they make any alteration is the state of a believer; for once in a justified flate, ways in a justified flate. It is true likewise. that, as to those fitts which now he bath committed, he cannot be faid to be acquitted or justified, till this pardon be got out by faith and repentance, as is faid: yet his tate remaineth fixed and unchanged; fo that the God should feem to deal with such in his dispensations as with enemies, yet really his affections change not: he never accountern them real enemies; may, love fieth at the bottom of all his sharpest dispensations. If they for sake bis law, and walk not in his judgments, if they break his flatutes and keep not his commandments, be will vifit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with fripes: nevertheless his loving-kindness will be not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fait; his cobenant will be not break, nor after the thing that is gone

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How to make use of Christ out of bis lips, Pfal, 89, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. And again, tho after-transgressions may awaken challenges for former fins which have been pardoned and blotted out. and give occasions to Satan to raile a fform in the foul and put all in confusion; yet really fins once pardoned cannot become again unpardoned fins: the Lord doth not revoke his sentence, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth. It is true likewise, that a believer, by committing of gross fins, may come to miss the effects of God's favour and good-will, and the intimations of his love and kindness; and so be made to cry with David, Pfal 51. 8. Make me to bear joy and pladness; and v. 12. Reftore unto me the joy of thy falva. tion, &cc. Yet that really holdeth true, that whom he loveth he loveth to the end, and he is a God that changeth not, and his gifts are without repentance. Yea, tho' grieving of the Spirit may bring fouls under sharp throws and pangs of the Spirit of bondage, and the terrors of God, and his sharp arrows, the poison whereof may drink up their spirits, and so be far from the actual witnessings of the Spirit of adoption; yet the Spirit will never be again really a Spirit of bondage unto fear, nor deny his own work in the foul, or the foul's real right to, or possession of, that fundamental privilege of adoption; I fay, that the foul is no more a fon, nor within the covenant.

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2. The course before-mentioned is to be taken with all fins, tho, 1. They be never so hainous and gross.
2. Tho they be accompanied with never such aggravating and crying aggravations.
3. Tho they be fins frequently fallen into. And, 4. Tho they be fins many and heaped together. David's transgression was a hainous fin, and had hainous aggravations, yea, there was an heap and a complication of fins together in that one; yet he followed this course. We find none of those kind of sins excepted in the new covenant; and, where the law doth not distinguish, we ought not to distinguish: where God's law doth not expressly exclude us, we should not exclude ourselves. Christ death is able enough to take away all sin. If thro's

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s believer be justified from all his transgressions committed before conversion, why may not also a believer be, thro' vertue of it, justified from his gross and multiplied sins committed after conversion? The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Christ hath raught his followers to pray, Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us; and he hath told us also, that we must torgive our brother seventy times seven, Mat. 18. 22. We would not be discouraged then from taking this course, because our sins are such and such; nay rather, we would look on this as an argument to press us more unto this way, because, the greater our sins be, the greater need have we of pardon, and to say with David, Psal. 25. 11. Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.

3. We would not think, that, upon our taking of this course, we shall be instantly freed from challenges because of those sins, for pardoning whereof we take this course; nor should we think, that because challenges remain, that therefore there is no pardon had, or that this is not the way to pardon: for, as we shall thew afterward, pardon is one thing, and intimation of pardon is another thing; we may be pardoned, and yet suppose that we are not pardoned: challenges will abide till the conscience be sprinkled, and till the Prince of peace command peace to the conscience, and put the accuser to silence; who, when he can do no more, will mar the peace of a believer as long as he can, and ftop the current of his comforts: which made David pray, that God would restore to bim the joy of his salvation, Pial. 51.

4. Nor would we think, that, upon our taking of this course for the pardon of our sins, we shall never thereafter meet with a challenge upon the account of these sins. It is true, when sins are pardoned, they are sully pardoned in God's court, and that obligation to condemnation is taken away, and the pardoned person is looked upon as no sinner, that is, as no person liable to condemnation because of these sins; for, being pardoned, he becometh just before God: yet we dare not say, but conscience afterward, being alarmed with new transferssions, may mistake, as people suddenly put into a

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fright are ready to do; nor dare we say, that God will not permit Satan to upbraid us with those fins which have been blotted out long ago, as he suffered Shimei, who was but an instrument of Satan, to cast up to David his blood-guiltiness, which had been pardoned long before. The Lord may think good to suffer this, that his people may be kept humble, and made more tender and watchful in all their ways.

5. Believers would not misimprove or abuse this great condescendency of free grace, and take the greater liberty to sin, because there is such a sure, safe and pleasant way of getting those sins blotted out and forgiven. Shall we sin, because we are not under grace, but under the law? That he far from us, saith the Apostle, Rom. 6/15. This were indeed to turn the grace of God into lastiviousness. And it may be a question, it such as have really repented, and gotten their fins pardoned, will be so teady to make this use of it: sure, sense of pardon will work some other effects, as we see, Ezek 16.26, 63.

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6. The believer, in going about this work of nailing his fins to the cross of Christ, and of improving Christs death, resurrection and constant intercession for the obtaining of pardon, would not think of going alone, or of doing this in his own strength; for of himself he can do nothing. He must look to Christ for grace to help in this time of need, and must go about this duty with dependence on him, waiting for the influences of light counsel, strength and grace from him to repent and believe: for he is a Prince exalted to give repentance first and last, and he is the author and finisher of faith so that without him we can do nothing.

j. Let the believer beware of concluding, that he hath got no pardon, because he hath met with no set sible intimation thereof by the flowing in of peace an joy in his soul. Pardon is one mercy, and intimation of it to the soul is another distinct mercy, and separab from it: Shall we therefore say, we have not gotte the sirst, because we have not gotten both? The Lor for wife reasons, can pardon poor suners, and not gotten with the sirst, and not gotten between the same any intimation thereof; to wit, that they may was

for taking away daily guilt.

more against sin afterward, and not be so bold as they have been, and that they may find more in experience what a bitter thing it is to fin against God, and learn withal to depend on him for less and more, and to car-

ry more humbly: for it may be God feeth, that, if they faw their fins pardoned, they would forget themselves,

and rush into new fins again.

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8. The believer must not think it strange, if he find more trouble after great fins, and a greater difficulty to lay hold on Christ for pardon of those, than for pardon of others: for as God hath been more dishonoured by these, so is his anger more kindled upon that account; and it is suitable for the glory of God's justice. that our forrow for fuch hainous fins be proportionably and this will likewife increase the difficulty: and ordinarily the effects of God's fatherly displeasure make deeper wounds in the foul after fuch fins, and these are not so easily healed. All which will call for fuitable and proportionably greater godly forrow and repentance, and acts of faith; because faith will meet with more opposition and discouragement there, and therefore must be the more strong, to go thorow these impediments, and to lay hold on his crofs. Yet, tho this should make all watchful, and to guard against gross and crying fins, it should not drive any to despair, nor to fay, with that despairing wretch, their fin is greater than it can be forgiven: the ocean of mercy can drown and swallow up greater as well as leffer fins; Christ is an all-fufficient Mediator, for the greatest fins, as well as for the leaft. O for thy name's Jake pardon mine iniquity, for it is great, will come in season to a foul ready to link with the weight of this militone ned about its neck.

9. As the greater fins should not make us despair of taking this course for remission, so nor should the smalness of sin make us to neglect this way; for the least sin cannor be pardoned but thro Jesus Christ: for the law of God is violated thereby, justice provoked, God's authority vilipended, &c. and therefore cannot be now pardoned, by reason of the threatnings annexed to the transgression of the law, without a ransom. Death

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180 How to make use of Christ is the wages of all sins, lesser and greater; and the curse is due to all sinners, greater and smaller: Therefore the believer would not suffer one sin, seen and discovered, to by unpardoned; but, on the first discovery thereof, take it away to Christ, and nail it to his cross.

10. The heliever would not conclude that his fins are not pardoned, because possibly temporal strokes, inflicted because of them, are not removed: for the Da. vid's fin was pardoned, yet, because of that fin of his, a temporal stroke attended him and his family to his dying day; for not only did God cut off the child, 2 Sam. 15. 14. but told him, that the foord Should never depart from his bouse, and that be avould raise up evil againft him out of his own boufe, and give his wives to one that sould ly with them in the fight of the fun, v. 10, 11. So we read, that the Lord took vengeance on their inventions, whose fins he had pardoned, Pfal, 99.8. God may fee this fit and expedient, for his own glory, and for humbling of them, and causing them fear the more to fin against him. Yea, not only may temporal calamities be inflicted because of fin pardoned, or continued after fin is pardoned; but even sense of God's displeasure may continue after pardon, as appeareth by that penitential Pfalm 51. penned by David, after Nathan had spoken to him concerning his fin. Questions or objections answered.

I. What course shall we take with secret sins? I answer, This same course must be followed with them. There is an implicite repentance of sins that have not been distinctly seen and observed; as, who can see and observe all their failings? and so there may be an implicite faith acting; that is, the believer being perswaded that he is guilty of mo sins than he hath yet got a clear sight of, as he would bewail his condition before God because of these, and sorrow for them after a godly manner; so he would take them together in a heap, or as a closed bag full, and by faith nail them to the cross of Christ, as if they were all distinctly seen and known. Who can understand his errors? said David, Psal.

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2. But what if, after all this, I find no intimation of pardon to my foul? Anf. As this should serve to keep thee humble, so it should excite to more diligence in this duty of going with thy sins to Christ, and to ply him and his cross more, in and thro the promises, and keep thy soul constant in this duty of running to Christ as an all-sufficient Mediator, and as an Intercessor with the Father; and thus wait on him who waiteth to be gracious, even in this particular, of intimating pardon to thy soul: He knoweth when it is fittest for thee to

know that thy fins are forgiven.

3. But, what can yield me any ground of peace, while it is fo, that I fee no pardon or remission granted to me? Ans. This may yield thee peace, that, following this course, which hath been explained, thou art about thy Thou art not at peace with fin, nor harbouring that viper in thy foul; thou art mourning and forrowing over it, and running to Christ the Prince of pardons, thro' his blood and intercession, conform to the covenant of redemption, and after the encouragement given in the many and precious promises of the covenant of grace; and having these promises, and rolling thy guilt on Christ as thy cautioner, conform to the manner expressed in the gospel, thou art allowed to believe that thy fins are pardoned, and that thou are accepted in the beloved; and so quiet thy soul thro' faith, God abiding faithful and true, and his promises being all yea and amen in Christ.

4. But, so long as I find not intimation of pardon, I cannot think that I have taken the right gospel-way of bringing my fins to Christ. Ans. The that will not follow, as we cleared above (for a foul may take the right gospel-way of getting the guilt of their fins taken away in Christ, and God may pardon thereupon, and for all that not think it fit to give intimation of that pardon as yer, for wise and holy ends) yet the soul may humble itself for its shortcoming, and still go about the duty, amending in Christ what it supposet is amiss, and renewing its acts of repentance and faith, and beg

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of Christ understanding in this matter, and so continue carrying fin alway to Christ's cross, and eying his intercession, and wait for a full clearing of the matter in his good time.

5. Bur, what shall I do with the guilt of my weak repentance, and weak faith? Ans. When with a weak and desective repentance and faith thou art carrying thy sins away to Christ, and nailing them to his cross, let the impersections of thy faith and repentance go with

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the reft, and leave all there.

6. What shall I do with my conscience, that still accuferh me of guilt, notwithstanding of my taking and following this course? Anf. Despise not the accusations of conscience; but let these humble thee the more, and keep thee closser at this duty: yet know, that conscience is but an under-fervant and God's deputy, and must accuse according to law (I speak not here of the irregular, furious and turbulent motions of Satan, casting in grenadoes in the foul and conscience, to raise a combustion, and put all in a fire) its mouth must be stopt by law; and so the foul would flay and answer the acculations of conscience with this, that he hath fled to Christ the only Mediator and Cautioner, and cast his burden on him, and leaneth to his merits alone, and hath put those fins in his hand as his advocate and intercellor with the Father; and that the gospel requireth no more of him. And if conscience should say, that both faith and repentance are imperfect and defective; and that guilt is thereby rather increased than taken away: he must answer again, True; but I have done with the guilt of my faith and repentance, as with the rest, taken all to Christ, and lest all on him; and herein only do I acquiesce: I look not for pardon for my imperfect faith and repentance, yea, nor would I look for pardon of my fins for my faith and repentance, were they never so perfect, but only in and thro' Jesus Christ, the only Cautioner, Redeemer and Advocate. But further, this deputy would be brought to his Master, who can only command him to filence: that is to fay, the believer would go to Christ with the accusing conscience, and defire him to command it silence, that he

may have peace of conscience, and freedom from those accusations that are bitter and troublesom. Remember withal, that if these accusations drive thee to Christ, and indear him more to thy soul, they will do no harm, because they drive thee to thy only resting place, and to the grand peace-maker. But, if otherwise they discourage or sorslow thee in thy motion Christ-ward, then be sure conscience speaketh without warrant, and its accusations ought not in so far, and as to that end, to be regarded.

## - ding this golds C H A P. IX.

How to make use of Christ for cleansing of us from our daily spots.

Aving spoken of the way of making use of Christ for removing of the guilt of our daily transgressions, we come to speak of the way of making use of Christ for taking away the fifth that cleaveth to the foul, thro' daily transgressions: for every fin defileth the man, Mat. 15. 20. and the best are said to have their spots, and to need washing, which presupposeth filthiness and defilement, Epb. 5.27. John 13. 8, 18. Hence we are so oft called to this duty of washing and making us clean, Ifa. 1.16. Jer. 4. 14. Alls 22. 16. David prays for this washing, Pfal. 51. 2, 7. and it is Christ's work to wash, 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rev. 1 5. Epb. 5. 26. Sec Tit. 2. 5. Now, in speaking to this, we shall observe the fame method; and first shew, what Christ hath done to take away this fifth; and next, what way we are to make use of him for this end, to get our spots and hithiness taken away, that we may be holy.

As to the first, For the purging away of the filth of our daily failings and transgressions, Christ hath done

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I. He hath died, that he might procure this benefit and advantage to us; and thus he hath washed us meritoriously in his blood, which he shed upon the cross. Thus he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, Rev. 1. 5. and this is from all sins, as well such.

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as are committed after, as such as are committed before conversion. Thus be by bimself purged our sins, Heb. 1.3. viz. by offering up of himself as an expiatory sacrifice to make an atonement, and so procure this liberty. So also it is said, Epb. 5. 25, 26, 27. that Christ gave bimself for bis church, that he might sandify and cleanse it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be kely and without blemish. So, Tit. 2. 14. He gave himself for us, that he—might purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Here then is the foundation and ground of all our cleansing and purification; Christ's death procuring it.

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2. As he hath procured, so he sendeth the Spirit to effectuate this, and to work this washing and sanctification in us. Hence it is said, I Cor. 6. 11. that we are sanctified and washed in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. We are said to be saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our saviour, Tit. 3. 5, 6. The sending then, or shedding, of the holy and sanctifying Spirit upon us, whereby we are sanctified, and consequently purified and purged from our filth, is a fruit of Christ's death and mediation, being purchased thereby, and is an effect of his resurrection and glorification, and intercession in glory.

3. He hath made a fountain of his blood for this end, that we may go to it daily, and wash and be clean: thus his blood cleanseth from all sin, 1 John 1. 7, 9. This is the fountain opened to the bouse of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness,

Zech. 13. 1.

4. He hath purchased and provided the external means, whereby this cleansing and sanctification is brought about, viz. the preaching of the gospel, which he himself preached, and thereby sanctified, John 15.

3. Now are ye clean through the word that I have spoken unto you. Eph. 5. 26. the church is sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water, by the word.

5. So hath he procured, and worketh in the foul, those graces that promove and carry on this work of fanctififor taking away daily defilements. 185 fanctification and purifying; such as faith, which purifieth the heart, Acts 15.9, whereof he is the author and finisher, Heb. 12. and hope, which whosoever hath, purifieth bimself, even as he is pure, 1 John 3.3.

6. He hath confirmed and ratified all the promises of the covenant, which are ample and large, touching this cleansing and washing, Jer. 35.8. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me. Ezek. 36.25. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness. So, Ezek, 37.23.—and I will cleanse them. And all the other promises of the covenant, apprehended by saith, have no small influence on our cleansing, 2 Cor. 7.

1. Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves, &c. all which promises are yea and amen in Christ, 2 Cor. 1.20.

Thus Christ hath made all sure for the cleanling and washing of his people, conform to that article of the covenant of redemption; So shall be sprinkle many nati-

ons, Isa. 52, 15.
Secondly, As to the way of our use

Secondly, As to the way of our use-making of Christ for the purging away of our filth and daily pollutions,

believers would take this course;

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1. They would remember and live in the conviction of the exceeding abominableness and filthiness of fin, which is compared to the vomit of a dog, and to the mire wherein the sow walloweth, 2 Pet. 2. 22. filthy rags, I/a. 64. 6. to a menstruous cloth, I/a. 30. 26. and the like; that this may move them to seek with greater care and diligence to have that filth washen away.

2. They would remember also how abominable fin makers them in the eyes of an holy God, who cannot behold iniquity, being a God of purer eyes than to behold it, Habak, 1.13, nor can be look on it; and how therefore no unclean thing can enter in into the new Jerulalim, nor any thing that defileth. And this will make them so much the more to abhor it, and to seek to be washen from it.

3. They would look by faith upon the blood of Christ, that is shed for this end, to wash filthy souls into; and run

186 How to make use of Christ run to it as a sountain opened for this end, that they might come to it, and wash and be clean.

4. For their encouragement, they would grip by faith to the promises of the new covenant, which are

large and full.

5. And remember the end of Christ's death, viz. to purchase to himself a holy people, zealous of good works; to present them to himself holy, and without spot and wrinkle, or any such things; and this will be

a further encouragement.

6. They would put the work by faith in his hand, who hath best skill to wash a foul soul, and to purge away all their spots; and by faith pray for and expect the Spirit, to sanctify and cleanse them from all their silthiness: that is, they would make known and spread sorth their abominations before the Lord, and eying Christ as the only great high Priest, whose blood is a sountain to wash in, would lay the work on him, and by faith put him to wash away that filth, and to purify their souls by his Spirit, pardoning their bygone iniquities, and renewing them in the spirit of their minds by grace, that they may walk before him in fear. Thus they would roll the work on him, and leave it there.

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1. The believer would in all this work be kept in the

exercise of those graces following;

(1.) Of humility, seeing what a vile filthy wretch he is, that stands in need of washing and purging daily, be-

cause of his daily pollutions and transgressions.

(2.) Of love, confidering whith what a loving God he hath to do, that hath provided so liberally all things for him, and particularly hath provided a sountain, and such a sountain, whereto he not only may but is commanded to resort daily.

(3.) Of thankfulness, remembring how great this merey is, how unworthy he is on whom it is bestowed, and

who he is that doth grant it.

(4.) Of fear, left God's goodness be abused, and he provoked, who is so gracious to us.

(5.) Of fincerity and godly ingenuity; avoiding all hy-

for taking away daily defilements, a87 poerify and formality, knowing that we have to do with him who will not be mocked.

(6.) Of holy harred, lothing and abhorrence of fin, which maketh us so filthy and odious in the eyes of the

Lord.

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2. This course would be followed for the purging away of the least sins: for, till they be purged away, we remain in our filth, and cannot expect God's favourable countenance, nor his warm embracements, nor the hearty intimations of his love and kindness. And a small inconsiderable-like spot may grow greater, and provoke God to let the accuser of the brethren, Satan, who always waits for his opportunity, loose upon us; and a conscience wakned may make much of a little defilement to keep the soul from approaching to God.

3. This course would be followed with every fin quickly, without delay: for the longer those spots continue, it will be the more difficult to get them taken away; the soul will after some time become the less troubled about them, and possibly forget them, and so they will remain: and this may occasion at last a sad distance, and provoke God to hide his sace, which will cause more bitterness and sorrow. It were good then

to keep up a spirit of tenderness and fear.

4. Let this be our daily work and exercise; for we are daily contracting new filth. Yesterday's cleanling will not save us from new filth to-day; nor will our running to the sountain to-day, serve to take away new spots to-morrow: new spots call for new washing; so that this must be our very life and exercise, to be daily and continually running to the sountain with our souls, and giving Christ, the great purger, much to do.

5. We must not think to be perfectly washen so long as we are here; for we will be contracting new filth daily, our feet will still be to wash, John 13. 10. We will not be without spot or wrinkle, till we come home to

that place wherein entreth nothing that defileth.

6. Let the believers recourse in this matter be wholly to Jesus Christ and his blood, and lay no weight on their sorrow, repentance or tears, or on any outward means which they are commanded to use: yet would they

Dot

nor lay afide these means, but go thro' them to the fountain, to Jesus, there and there only to be cleaned.

7. They would not be discouraged or despair when their spots appear great, and not like the spots of his children; for Christ's blood can purge from all sin, and wash away all their filth, of how deep so ever a dye it be. Christ's blood is so deep an ocean, that a mountain will be sunk out of sight in it, as well as a small pebble stone.

8. The Christ's blood be strong enough to purge from all sin, even the greatest; yet they would know, that scandalous spots, or a deep stain, may cost them more frequent running to the sountain, thro humiliation, godly sorrow, prayer and supplication. David's scandalous blot cost him more trouble and pains, before he got it purged away, than many others; as we see, Psale

51.

on another righteousness as our clothing and covering in the day of our appearance before our Judge, even the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which only is perfect, and able to save us from the wrath of God. Let us be never so washen in the matter of sanctification, and cleansed from our spots, we cannot for all that be accounted reighteous before God; nor will that satisfy justice, or take away the guilt so much as of one transgression before God. Christ's righteousness will be our upper garment for all eternity: this is the fine linen wherewith his bride is busked in heaven.

daily contracted filth, we would not forget to carry alongst with us the mother-corruption, which is the sink and puddle of all filthiness; I mean, our natural corrupted rottenness and pollution, from whence flow all our other actual pollutions. We would do well to carry mother and daughter both together to the sountain. David prayeth to be washen and purged, as well from his original filthiness wherein he was conceived and born, as from his blood-guiltiness, Plal. 51. 5, 7.

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for taking away daily defilements. 189 tonnels; but rather let it sharpen our diligence in warching against all occasions of sin, lest we again defile our souls.

12. Not only must we have our bodies or our outward conversation washen, but our souls within, the frame of our heart, our understanding, will, affections and consciences sprinkled with that blood. The blood of Christ, who thro the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, must purge our consciences from dead sporks, to serve the living God, Heb. 9. 14. And we must have our bearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, Heb. 10. 22.

Finally, If the believer fear that he shall not be able to remember all these particular duties, let him remember this, to wit, to put a foul soul, defiled with original and actual pollutions, in Christ's hand daily, and leave it with him to wash by his blood and Spirit; and yet remember to lay the weight of his acceptance before God, upon the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and not upon his own cleanness when thus sanctified and washen, which is but imperfect.

Questions or objections answered.

But, alas, some may object, and say, That their very saith, which must carry the rest of their filth to the sountain of Christ's blood, is defiled: How then can they expect to be made clean? Ans. The blood of Jesus Christ is sufficiently able to wash all our filth away, and the filth of saith as well as of other actions: therefore, when saith, as a hand, is carrying the filth of the soul away to Christ to be washen in his blood; let the soul hand go with the soul handful, give Christ saith and all so wash.

2. But what shall I do, when notwithstanding of all this, my conscience shall still accuse me of uncleanness, and cry out against me as sitthy and abominable? Ans. Take it away also to the blood of Jesus, that here it may be purged, Heb. 9. 14. and here alone, till we get our bearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, Heb. 10. 22. The conscience must be steeped (to speak so) in the blood of Jesus, and so it shall be clean: and taking our sithy hearts to this cleansing sountain, to be washen,

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we will get them delivered and sprinkled from an evil conscience, that it shall no more have ground of accusation against us. When we have it to say, that we have put our filthy souls in the hands of the great cleanser, Jesus Christ, and brought all our pollutions to his blood; what can conscience say to us? The Lord, it is true, may suffer our consciences still to bark upon us, and cast up our filthiness to us, that we may be the more humbled, and be put to ly more constant ly at the sountain; yet when we have sled to Christ, and taken our filthiness to the open and appointed sountain, we can answer the accusations of conscience, in law, and have peace.

2. But I am apt to think, will some say, that, if I had once taken the right way to get my fins and filthinels purged away, my conscience would trouble me no more; but now, so long as it doggeth me thus, I cannot think that the way which I have taken is the right way. Anf. Tho the Lord may think good to fuffer conscience to trouble'a man for a time, o he hath taken the right way, as is faid, for a further exercise and trial to him; yet the believer will have no lofs nor difadvantage by examining his way, and trying whether he bath laid the matter cleanly over on Christ, or whether he hath laid too much weight on his own humiliation, forrow and pains; and whether he be leaving the matter on Jesus, and expecting to be washen alone in his blood, or looking in to himfelf, and expecting fome help in the matter from felf: and, after trial, would mourn for any falling he gets discovered, and still be about that work of running with filth to the fountain. But withal, they would go to Christ for help, because without him they cannot come to him, they cannot come or carry their foul to the fountain opened for for and uncleanness; fo that, in all this work, there would be a fingle dependence on Christ for understanding and frength to go about this work aright.

Thus have we endeavoured to clear up Christ's being the Way to the Father, first and last; and how all believers or unbelievers are to make use of him, as the Way to the Father, whatever their condition be. From

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for taking away daily defloments. all which we may lee, 1. That luch are in a wretched and forlorn condition, who are fill flrangers to Christ. and will not lay hold on him, nor come to him, and walk in him, and make use of hime They are unrighted bus and unhole, and daily contracting more guilt and more filth; and they know no way either for justification or fanctification, but a way of felf, which will prove like the brooks which run dry in fummer, and disappoint the weary traveller when he hath most need. They are without Christ, and so without the way, the only way, the fafe and fure way to the Father. And oh if all that is here spoken could induce them to think once of the misery of their condition, and to seek our for relief, that they might not only be faved from their state of fin and milery, but brought into a flate of falvation thro' Jefus Christ; so that they might be justified before God, from all that justice, the devil, the law or conscience could lay against them; and throughly fanctified, and so at length brought home to the Father, fair and spotless! 2. Upon the other hand, we fee the nable advantage of believers, who thro' grace are entred into this way; for it is a full and compleat way, that shall carry them fate home: they shall find that he is able to fave to the uttermost all that come to God thro' him. And O if they were fenfible of this! how should it excite them to thankfulness! how would it encourage them to run thorow difficulties great and many ! 3. We fee, what a special duty lieth upon believers to make special bife of Christ in all things as the way to the Father, and fo march to heaven in him as the only way, march in his hands, or rather be carried in his arms and bofom. This were to go from strength to strength, till ar length they appeared in Zion, and landed in that pleasant place of reft, where the weary are at reft, and yet reft not day nor night, but fing praifes to bim that bath redeemed them by bis blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and and people, and nation, faying, Bleffing, bonour, glory and power be unto bim that fitteth upon the throne, and unto the be Lamb for ever and ever, Rev. 5. 9, 13. 4. Hence we may see the cause of the leanness of believers, of their is th wandrings, of their fhortcomings, of their many defile-Prof ments,

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Some generals forwing ments, &c. oiz. their por conftant making use of Christ

as the way in all things, according to the tenor of the golpel. Oh if this were laid to heart and mourned for,

and if grace were fought to help it

This one point of truth, That Chrift is the Way, well understood, and rightly put into practice, would do all our business both as to justification and fandification : and were poor finners once entred into this way, and had they grace from this way to walk in it, it would prove their life and falvation; for it is the marrow and fub. stance of the whole gospel. So that there needeth little more to be faid: yet we shall speak a little to the other particulars in the text.

## CHAP. X. The TRUTH.

Some generals proposed.

HAT what we are to speak for the clearing and improving of this noble piece of truth, That Christ is the Truth, may be the more clearly understood and edifying, we first take notice of some generals, and then flow particularly how, or in what respects, Christ is called the Truth; and finally speak to some cases wherein we are to make use of Christ as the Truth.

As to the first; There are four general things here to

be noticed.

First, This supposeth what our case by nature is, and what we are all without Christ, who is the Truth:

if, It supposeth, that without Christ we are in darknels, mistakes, errors: yea, we are said to be darknels itself, Epb. 5. 8. Te were sometimes darkness, &c. John 1. 5. and of darkness, 1 Theff. 5. 5. yea, under the power of darkness, Col. 1. 13. John 12. 35. 1 John 2. 11. walking in darkness, I John 1. 6. and abiding in darkmefs, 1 Pet. 2. 9. 1 Theff. 5. 4. John 12. 46. We wander and go aftray as foon as we are born, speaking lies, Plal

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deth truth,

bow Christ is the Truth.

18. 3. yea, we go aftray in the greatness of our folly. Prov. 5. 23. we are all gone aftray, Ifa. 53. 6. See also P(al. 119. 67, 176. fo far are we from any knowledge of or acquaintance with truth, or with the way of truth.

adly, It supposeth, that we cannot turn into the right way: a spirit of error and untruth leadeth us continually wrong; like the sheep we wander still, and we weary ourselves in our wandring, and so spend all our labour and pains in vain. Being under the power of un-

troth and error, we cannot walk one step right.

adly, Tho all other ways, befide him who only isthe Way and the Truth, be falle ways and by-ways, leading us away from the true refting-place, and from that Way which is the Truth; yet we are prone and ready to cleave to those false and erroneous ways, to grip to shadows, and to lean to them, as if they were the ways of truth: fuch as,

1. A good heart, which many may imagine they have,

when they have nothing less.

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2, Good intentions and purpoles for time to come, which such as were not under the power of error and untruth would never deceive themselves withal.

3. An harmless life, without scandalous outbreakings to the reproach of Christianity: a foundation on which no wife man, led by truth, would build his falvation

or hopes of eternal happiness.

4. An outward, moral, civil and discreet carriage, which no man can blame, and wherein a heathen can outstrip many called Christians; so that it must be a poor ground to found our hopes upon, and yet many are so blinded, that they lean all their weight upon such a rotten staff.

5. Outward exercise of religious duties, wherein a Pharifee may outfirip many: and yet, O how many build all their hopes of heaven upon this fandy foundation

on, which none but blinded persons would do!

6. The commendation and applause of ministers and Christians is that which many rest upon: which is a sad proof of the blindness of their hearts.

7. The way of good works and alms-deeds blindfoldeth many, and sheweth that they were never led by buth, or taught of Christ, who is the Truth.

8. Some pinching grief and forrow for fin is another way which people, strangers to the truth, deceive themfelves withal.

9. A common fort of repentance, backed with some kind of amendment and outward reformation, is a way that many rest secure in, the it lead to destruction:

10. Freedom from challenges of conscience deceiveth

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Tho' these and such like ways be dangerous, yea deadly; yet, how many are there to be found among Christians, that have no better ground of their hope of salvation, and will cleave to them so fast, as no preaching will make them so much as once question the matter, or suspect that these ways will in end deceive them? so strong is their inclination to the way of error, tho' not as the way of error.

Fourthly, It presupposeth also an inclineableness in us by nature to wander out of the way; for being nothing but a mass of error, made up of darkness, ignorance and mistakes, we have a strong biass to error, which agreeth best with our natural corrupted temper. Hence is it, that we have such a strong propension to error and

mistakes, whether,

1. Concerning God, and his way of dealing with his Church or with ourselves, O how ready are our hearts by nature to hatch and foment wrong, unfeemly, untrue yea unchriftian, if not blasphemous thoughts and conceptions of his nature, attributes, word and works and how ready and prone are we to receive and enter tain wrong apprehensions of all his ways and dealing with his Church and people! And as for his works in and about ourselves, O what unsuitable, erroneous false, ungodly, absurd and abominable opinions do w with greediness drink in, and foster, yea, feed upor with delight! Who is able to recount all the errors and militakes which our heart by nature is ready to admi and foster with complacency? Are we nor by nature rea dy to say that there is not a God, as the fool, Pfal. 14 1. or that he is not fuch a God as his word and work declare him to be, a holy, just, righteous, omnipoten omnipresent, omniscient God, &c. or that he is a change

able God, and actually changed, not being the fame now, which sometime he was; that he hath forgotten to be gracious, and remembreth not his people in advertity, and so is not tender and merciful; that he hath forgotten his promises, and so is not faithful and true; that he approve hof sin, because he suffereth the way of the wicked to prosper, and so is not an holy God? E. Yea, do not oftimes such thoughts as these lodge within the heart of the truly godly? all which sheweth how prone we are to receive and entertain erroneous and false thoughts of God.

2. Concerning ourselves, supposing ourselves to be born again and reconciled to God, when yet we are living in black nature: and who so bold and consident that they are right, as such as are furthest out of the way? Or, on the the other hand, supposing ourselves to be in a bad state, and in nature and darkness, when the day star from on high hath visited us, and brought our souls from death unto life: and who more ready to complain than such as have least cause? Or supposing ourselves in a good condition, lively, active, diligent, watchful, &c. when it is just otherwise with us; or, on the contrary, complaining of deadness; formality, upsitting, fainting, heartlesness in the ways of God, when it is not so; or, in questioned matters, taking truth to be error, and error to be truth.

3. Concerning others. How ready are we to run ei-

persons and actions?

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O where is the fairh of this natural condition? where is the real conviction of it? fure there is but little real

believing of this, when,

themselves, or question either their state or condition at one time or other; never once imagine that their blinded hearts may deceive them; never once dream of a possibility of mistaking, and of dying with a lie in their right hand.

2. And so many that are not lamenting and bewailing this their condition, nor crying out and complaining of a false, deceifful and desperately wicked heart. 3. And so few that are indeed humbled under the sense of this, and made therefore to walk more watchfully and soberly, with an eye always upon their treacherous and deceiving hearts.

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4. And so few crying for help from God against this deceitful adversary, thro daily experience of the atherism, hypocrify, ignorance, misconceptions of God and of his ways, and deceitfulness of our hearts, might suf-

ficiently put it out of doubt with us.

Next, How miserable must their condition be, who are yet strangers to Christ? for they are living in darkness, lying in darkness, walking in darkness, yea, very darkness itself, a mass of error, mistakes, ignorance, and misconceptions of all things that are good, and still wandring out of the way.

Finally, Should not this preach out to and convince us all of a necessity of having more acquaintance with truth, with Jesus Christ who is the Truth, that we may be delivered from this wosul and wretched condi-

tion? for truth only can fet us free therefrom.

The fecond general thing to be noticed here is, That all other ways and courses which we can take or follow that we may obtain life, beside Christ, are but lies, false and deceitful ways; there is no truth in them: for he only is the Truth; no other whatsoever can bear this epithet. For,

ways, whatever we may imagine and dream, can yield

no true fatisfaction in this matter.

2. He only can fecure the foul from destructive ruinous courses, which will undo the soul; all other ways will fail here; none of them can give the least security to the soul, that they shall not bring him, in end, to destruction and everlasting perdition.

3. He only can bring the foul fafe through all oppofition and difficulties in the way: no other way can do this, but will leave us in the mire ere ever we come to

the end of our journey.

4. He will not deceive nor disappoint the soul: a other ways, in end, will prove treacherous, and give the traveller a doleful and sad disappointment.

bow Christ is the Truth, warning should this be to us all

O what a warning should this be to us all, to take heed that we embrace not a lie instead of him who is the Truth, and fit not down with a shadow instead of the substance! How ready are we to put other things in his place? but whatever it be that gets his room in the soul, tho good and worthy in itself, will prove a lie. Even, I. All our outward holiness and duties: yea, 2. All our experiences and great attainments: yea, 3. All our gifts and enduements: ay, 4. Our very graces: none of these are Christ; and if we place that hope and considence in them, which we should place on him, they will not prove the truth to us. He alone is the Truth.

How fure then should we labour to be, that we do not die with a lie in our right-hand? and how carefully should we guard against the trusting in, or leaning to, any thing that is not Christ, and whole Christ, and only Christ, and Christ as offered in the gospel? seeing this way is only the truth, and no other way will be found so in end, tho at present we may find in it,

1. Some inward peace and quietness of heart, as if all

were right.

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2. Some satisfaction of mind, things being right as we apprehend, but falfly, thro the deceirfulness of the heart.

3. Something like affurance and confidence that all

will be right with us.

4. And hope founded thereupon, which may help to ride thorow fome storms, and yet fail us at length.

The third general is this, Christ Jesus is not only the Truth in himself, but also in reference to us. The scope of the place cleareth this. As he is the Way and the Life, for our use; so he is the Truth: not only as God qual with the Father, but also as Mediator, and our Immanuel.

As God, he is, r. Effentially Truth, being God

qual with the Father in power and glory.

2. In respect of veracity, he is the God of truth, Deut. 32. 4. faithful in all his sayings, Psal. 31. 5. keepng truth for ever, Psal. 146. 6.

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198. More particularly,

3. He is the fountain and spring-head of all created

truth; for he is the first Truth.

As Mediator, and in reference to us, he is full of grace and truth, John 1.14. He received not the Spirit in measure, John 3.34. and this Spirit is a Spirit of truth. But of this more, when we come to show more particularly how and in what respects he is called the Truth, as Mediator.

The fourth general, which is here observable, is, That he is not only called Truth, but the Truth, as he is the Way, and the Life; and not only true, but Truth in the abstract: which saith.

1. That he is every way Truth, however we confi-

der him, as God, or as Mediator.

2. That all truth is in him: all truth of salvation for us is to be found in him.

2. That all that is in him is truth, his natures, offices, performances, words, works, &c. all are true.

4. That he is pure and unmixed Truth : no lie in

him, no error or mistake there.

5. That truth in him is in its perfection and excellency: in the trueft of men it is very imperfect.

O what an excellent One must he be! how compleatly fitted and furnished for us! oh if our souls could love him, and close with him, and rest upon him as all-sufficient!

## CHAP. XI.

More particularly, in what respects Christ is called the

BUT, for further explaining of this matter, we would fee more particularly in what respects it is that he is called the Truth; and this will make way to our usemaking of him. So,

and types of him, under the law; hence, as the law (the whole Levitical and typical dispensation) came by Moses; so grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1.

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1. All these shadows and types pointed at him, and directed as with a singer the Israelites, who were under that dispensation, to look to Christ the promised Messiah, and to rest, and to lay all their weight on him: so that the law was a shadow of good things to come, Heb. 10. 1. Col. 2, 17.

2. They all terminate in him, he putting an end, by his coming and performing his work, to all those types, which only related to him, and to what he was to do the body being come, there is no more need of the shadow; and the thing typified existing, there is no more

need or use of the type.

3. They are all fulfilled in him, he answereth them all fully: so that whatever was shadowed forth by them is compleatly to be found in him. This the apossile in his epistle to the Hebrews abundantly evinceth; and Paul to the Colossians tells us, We are compleat in him, and therefore need no more follow the shadows.

Secondly, He is the Truth, in reference to the prophecies of old, all which did principally point at him and his concernments, his person, nature, offices, work, kingdom, &c. and whatever was foretold in these prophecies, is perfectly fulfilled in him, or done by him, or shall in due time be effectuated by him. He is that great Prophet, Spoken of, Deut. 18. 15, 13, 19. So said the Fews themselves, John 6. 14. All the Prophets from Samuel Spoke of bim, and of his days, Acts 3. 22, 23, 24. and to bim gave all the prophets witness, Acts 10. 43. And whatever they prophelied or wirnelled of him was, or is in due time to be, fulfilled in him, Hence we find the evangelists and apostles frequently applying the fayings and prophecies of the old testament unto him; and, Luke 4. 18. himself said, that the prophecy of ya. 61. 1, &cc, was fulfilled in him, See 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11, 12. And himfelf expounded to the two disciples going to Emmans, in all the scriptures, beginning at Moles and all the prophets, all the things concerning himself, Luke 24. 27. And thus is he the Truth of all the prophecies.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, He is the Truth, in reference to his undertaking with the Father in that glorious covenant of redemption: for whatever the Father laid on him to do, that he did fully and faithfully. He was to bear our griefs and to carry our forrows; and that he did. He was to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastifement of our peace was to be upon bim, and by bis firipes we were to be bealed, Isa. 53. 5. and so it was, Rom. 4. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 3: 1 Pet. 2. 23. His foul was to be made an offering for fin, Ifa. 53. 10. and fo it was; for he offered up himself a sacrifice for fin: yea, all that he was to do by vertue of that covenant, he did it perfectly, so as he cried out, while hanging on the cross, It is finished, John 19. 30. and in his prayer, John 17. he told the Father, v. 4. that he had glorified him on earth, and had finished the work which he gave him to do. So that the Father was well pleased with him, Mat. 2, 17. & 12. 18. & 17. 5. Mark 1. 11. Luke 3, 22,

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Fourthly, He is the Truth, in respect of his offices, which he took upon him for our good : for all the duties of these offices, which he was to do, and what remaineth to be done, he will perfect in due time, Did he take upon him the office of a Prophet? he did fully execute the same, in revealing mediately and immediately the whole counsel of God, John 1. 18. & 15. 15. Epb. 4. 11, 12, 13. All 20. 32. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11, 12. Heb. 1. 2. Did he take upon him the office of a Priest? so did he fulfil the same, offering up himself an expiatory facrifice to God, Heb. 9. 14, 28, & 2. 17. and becoming a Prieft, living for ever to make intercession for us, Heb. 7. 25. And, did he take on the office and function of a King? so doth he execute the same, calling a people to himself out of the world by his word and Spirit, Atts 15. 14, 15, 16. Ifa. 55. 4, 5. Pfal. 110. a. erecting a visible Church, a company of visible profellors, to protess and declare his name, which, as his kingdom, he ruleth with his own officers, laws, and penalties or censures; so that the government is on his shoulders, Ifa. 9. 6, 7. who is the Head of the body, the Church, Epb. 1. 22, 23. Col. 1. 18. And this his kingkingdom he ruleth, in a visible manner, by his own officers, &c. Epb. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12.28. Ifa. 33. 22. Mat. 18. 17, 18. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. And further, he executes this office, by effectually calling the elect, giving them grace, Alls 5. 3. rewarding the obedient, Rev. 22. 12. & 2, 10. chaftifing the disobedient, Rev. 3, 19. bringing his own home at length, thro all their temptations. afflictions, and overcoming all their enemies, 1 Cor. 15. 25. Pfal. 110. and at length he shall do the part of a King, when he shall judge quick and dead at the last day, 2 Theff. 1. 8, 9. Ads 17. 31. 2 Tim. 4. 1.

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Fiftbly, He is the Truth in this regard, that he fully answereth all the titles and names which he got. As he was called Jesus, so did he save his people from their fins, Mat. 1. 21. As he was called Chrift, fo was he anointed with the Spirit without measure, John 3. 34. Pfal. 45. 7. and separated for his work, and endued with all power for that effect, John 6. 27. Mat. 28. 18. 19, 20. and established to be a Prophet, Acts 3. 21, 22. Luke 4. 18. 21. a Prieft, Heb. 5. 5, 6, 7. & 4. 14, 15. and a King, Pfal, 2. 6. Ifa. 9. 6, 7. Mat. 21. 5. Phil. 2. 8, 9, 10, 11. Was he called immanuel? Ifa. 7. 14. fo was he indeed God with us, being God and Man in one person for ever. Was he called Wonderful? Ifa. 9. 6. so was he indeed in his two distinct natures in one perfon, at which the angels may wonder, Epb. 3. 10, 11. 1 Pet. 1. 12. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Was he called Counfeller? so was he indeed, coming out from the Father's bosom, with the whole counsel of God concerning our salvation, John 1. 14, 18. & 3. 13. & 5. 20. & 15. 15. Was he called the mighty God? so was he indeed, Pfal. 110. 1. Mat. 22. 44. Heb. 1. 13. Pfal. 45. 6. Heb. 1. 8, Fer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Mal. 3. 1. Mat. 11. 10. Pfal. 83. 18. Luke 1. 76. John 1. 1, 14. 1 John 5. 20. Tit. 2. 13. Rom. 9. 5. Was he called the everlasting Father ? so is he the Father of eternity, being (as some interprete the word) the author of eternal life, which he giveth to all that believe in him, John 6.39, 40, 47, 51. & 8. 51. & 10. 28. & 11. 25, 26. Heb. 5. 9, & 7. 25. Was he called the Prince of peace? So is he the Prince of peace indeed, being our peace, Mic. 5. 5. Epb. 2. 14. making More particularly, up peace betwirt God and us, Ifa. 53, 5, & 57. 19. Eph. 2. 17. Col. 1. 20. Hence his gospel is the gospel of peace, and his ministers ambassadors of peace, Isa. 52, 7. Rom. 10. 15, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Eph 6. 15. And he giveth peace to all his, Zech. 9, 10. John 14. 27. & 16. 33. Rom. 5. 1. & 8. 16. & 14. 17. 2 Thess. 3. 17. Was he called the Lord our Righteousness? Jer. 23. 6. so is he the same indeed, bringing in everlasting righteousness, Dan. 9, 24. and being made of God to us righteousness, 1 Cor. 1. 30. and making us righteous, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

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Sixtbly, He is the Truth, in reference to the promises,

which,

-I. Centre all in him, and lead to him, as the great promise.

2. Are founded all upon him, who is the only Medi-

ator of the covenant of promifes.

in him, 2 Gor. 1.20. He confirmed the promises made to the fathers, Rom. 15.8.

4. Are all dispensed and given out by him, who is the executor of his own testament, and the great dispensator of all that we need; so that what we ask of the Father, he giveth it himself, John 14.13, 14.

Seventbly, He is the Truth, in that he fully answereth all the hopes and expectations of his people. He shall not be found a liar unto them, whatever Satan may fuggest unto them, or a misbelieving heart may prompt them to conceive, and their jealousy may make them apprehend, and whatever his dispensations may now feem to fay. In end they shall all find, that he is the Truth, fully fatisfying all their defires, and granting all that ever they could hope for, or expect from him. They shall at length be satisfied with his likeness, Pfal. 17. 15. yea, abundantly fatisfied with the fatness of his house, Pfal. 26. 8. and with his goodness, Pfal. 65. 4. and that as with marrow and fatness, Pfal. 63. 5. One fight of his glory will fully fatisfy, and cause them cry out, Enough. Feremiab is not now faying, as once he did in the bitterness of his foul, thro' the power of corruption and compration, Chap. 15. 18. Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail? Eighthly,

Eighthly, He is the Truth, in opposition to all other ways of falvation: for,

i. There is no falvation now by the law of works; that covenant, being once broken; cannot any more fave; the law cannot now do it, in that it is weak through the

fleft, Rom. 8. 3.

2. There is no falvation now by the law of Moses, without Christ: hence Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, Rom. 9. 31,32. They went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God, Rom. 10. 3.

3. There is no falvation by any thing mixed in with Chrift, as the apostle fully cleareth in his epistle to the

Galatians.

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4. There is no salvation by any other way or medium which man can invent or fall upon, whereof there are not a few, as we shewed above: for, there is not another name given under beaven, by which we can be faued, but the name of Jesus, Acts 4. 12. No religion will save but this.

So that he is the true falvation, and he only is the true falvation, and is the fure and fafe falvation; fuch as make use of him, shall not be mistaken nor disap-

pointed, Ifa. 35. 8.

Ninthly, He is the Truth, in respect of his leading and guiding his people in the truth. Hence he is called a Teacher come from God, John 3. 2. and One that teacheth the way of God in truth, Mat. 22. 16. a Prophet mighty in deed and word, Luke 24. 19. And in this respect he is the Truth, upon several accounts;

1. Of his personal teaching. God spoke by him, Heb. 1.2. He revealed the Father's mind, Mat. 11. 27.

Fobn 1. 18.

2. Of his messengers sent by him, as prophets of old, apostles and ministers of late, whom he sendeth forth to make disciples, Mat. 28. 18. and to open the eyes of the blind, Ass 26. 18.

3. Of his word, which he hath left as our rule, and

which is a fure word of prophecy, more fure than a voice from heaven, 2 Pet. 1. 19.

4. Of his ordinances, which he hath established as

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means to guide us in the way of truth.

5. Of his spirit, whereby he maketh the word clear, John 14. 26. This Spirit is sent to teach all truth, and to lead and guide in all truth, John 16. 13. 1 John 2. 27. and sent by him, and by the Father in his name, John 14. 26. & 15. 16 & 16. 14.

6. Of his dispensations of providence, within us and without us, by which likewise he instructerh in the way

of truth.

Tenthly, He is the Truth, in respect of his bearing

witness to truth: and this he doth,

1. By himself, who was given for a witness, Isa. 55.
4. and came to bear witness to the truth, John 3. 10.
8. 18 37. and was a faithful witness, Rev. 1. 5. & 3.

2. By his ministers, who witness the truth of the gol-

pel, by publishing and proclaiming the same.

3. By his martyrs, who feal the truth with their blood, and so bear witness to it, Rev. 2, 13. & 17. 6. Alls 22, 20.

14. By his Spirit, sealing the truth of grace in a believer, and his interest in God thro' Christ, and his right to all the benefits of the new covenant: In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, Eph. I.

13, 14.

Eleventhly, He is the Truth, in respect that he carrieth towards poor sinners, in all things, according to the tenor of the gospel, and the offers thereof: he offers himself to all freely, and promiseth to put none away that come to him; and this he doth in truth: for no man can say, that he had a sincere and true desire to come to Jesus Christ, and that he rejected him, and would not look upon him. He giveth encouragement to all sinners to come that will be content to quit their sins, and promiseth to upbraid none that cometh; and, is there any that in their own experience can witness the contrary? He offers all freely; and did he ever reject

reject any upon the want of a price in their hand?
nay, hath not the cause of their getting no admittance
been, that they thought to commend themselves to Christ
by their worth, and would not take all freely, for the
glory of his grace? Let believers and others speak here
out of their own experience in truth and in uprightness, and it shall be found that he was and is the Truth.

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Twelfibly, He is the Truth, in that in all his dispenfations of the gospel, and in all his works and actions
in and about his own people, he is true and upright:
all his offers, all his promises, all his dispensations,
are done in truth and uprightness; yea, all are done
out of truth and uprightness of love, true tenderness
and affection to them, whatever the corruption of
jealousy and misbelies think and say to the contrary.
He is the Truth, and so always the same, unchangeable in his love, whatever his dispensations seem to
say: and the believer may rest assured hereof, that he,
being the Truth, shall be to him whatever his word
holdeth him forth to be, and that constantly and unchangeably.

## CHAP. XII.

Some general uses from this useful truth, that Christ is

Aving thus cleared up this truth, we should come to speak of the way of believers making use of him, as the Truth, in several cases wherein they will stand in need of him as the Truth. But, ere we come to the particulars, we shall first propose some general uses of this useful point.

First, This point of truth serveth to discover to us the world condition of such as are strangers to Christ, the Truth: and oh if it were believed! for,

I. They are not yet delivered from that dreadful plague of blindness, error, ignorance, mistakes, under which all are by nature; a condition that, if rightly seen, would cause the soully low in the dust.

2. Whatever course they take till they come to Christ,

Christ, and while they remain in that condition, is a lie, and a false, erroneous and deceitful way: for still they are turning aside to lies, Pfal. 40. 4: and seeking after them, Pfal. 4. 2.

that their way shall carry them thorow; yet in end they will be found to inherit lies, Jer. 16. 19. and meet with the saddest disappointment that can be: for instead of the sellowship of God, Christ, angels, and gloristed spirits, they shall take up their lodging with devil and damned souls; and that because they have made no acquaintance with the way of truth, and the way wherein they are is but a lie and a falshood, and so of necessary must deceive them.

not avail them, so long as they are strangers unto him who is the Truth. Their knowledge is but ignorance, because it is not a knowledge of him who is the Truth.

the day of their darkness, consulion and perplexity: for they are not reconciled unto the Truth, which alone can prove steadable and comfortable in that day.

6. They can do nothing to help themselves out of that state of darkness and ignorance; and whatever they do to help themselves shall but increase their darkness and misery, because there is no truth there; and Truth, even the Truth, alone can dispel these clouds of error, mistakes, ignorance, &c.

dition of believers, who have embraced this truth, and gotten their fouls opened to him who is the Truth:

i. They are in part delivered from that mask of dies, mistakes, mistapprehentions, errors, deceitfulness and ignorance, under which they lay formerly, and all the unregenerate do yet ly: and the they be not fully delivered therefrom, yet the day is coming when that shall be, and the begun work of grace and truth in them is a certain pledge thereof; and at present they have ground to believe, that that evil shall not again

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der grace, and under the guidance of truth.

2. Howheit they have many perplexing thoughts, doubts and fears of their state and condition, and think many a time that they shall one day or other perish by the way, and all their hopes and considence shall evanish; yet having given up themselves to truth, and to the Truth, they shall not be disposinted in end. The truth shall land them safe on the other side. The truth shall prove no lie.

3. They have a fast and steadable friend to go to, in a day of darkness, clouds, doubts, when falshood and lies are like to prevail; even the Truth, who alone can

help them in that day.

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4. Howbeit the knowledge they have of God, and of the mysteries of the gospel, be but small; yet that small measure being taugh by him who is the Truth, and flowing from truth, all prove sanctifying and saving.

5. They have ground to hope for more freedom from errors and deceirful lies than others: for they have chosen the way of truth, and given themselves up to

the leading of Truth.

Object. But, do not even such drink in and receive and plead for errors, as well as others? and, is it not sometime found that they even live and die in some

mistakes and errors?

Ans. I grant the Lord may suffer even some of his own to fall into and continue for sometime in errors, yea, and it may be all their days as to some errors; that hereby all may learn to tremble and sear, and to work out their salvation with sear and trembling. 2. Some may be tried thereby, Dan. 11. 35. 3. Others may break their neck thereupon. 4. To punish themselves, for not making that use of Truth, and of the Truth, that they should have done. Yet we should consider these sew things;

1. That there are many mo unregenerate persons that

fall into error.

2. If his people fall into error at any time, they do not always continue therein to the end. God for

General uses from Christ's his own glory maketh, fometime or other, truth thine in upon their foul, which discovereth that mistake; and presently the grace of God in their soul maketh them to abhor the same.

3. Or, if some continue in it to their dying day, yet they repent of it, by an implicite repentance, as they do of other unknown and unfeen evils that ly in their foul;

so that that error doth not deffroy their foul.

4. There are some gross errors, which a regenerate foul cannot readily embrace, or, if thro' a mistake, or the power of a temptation, they do embrace them, yet they cannot heartily close with them, whatever for a time, thro' corruption and pride, they may feem outwardly to do: and that because the very daily exercife of grace will discover them, and so they will be found to be against their daily experience; as some opittions of the Papifis, Arminians and Socinians, together with the abominable. Quakers, which a gracious foul, when not carried away with the torrent of corruption, and with the tempest of a temptation, cannot but observe to contradict the daily workings of grace in their foul, and the motions of their fanctified foul in prayer and other holy duties; and fo fuch as they cannot but find to be false by their own experience.

Thirdly, Here is ground for a sharp reproof of the

wicked, who continue in unbelief; and,

1. Will not believe, nor give any credit to his promifes, wherewith he feeketh to allure poor fouls to come to him for life,

2. Nor will they believe his threatnings, wherewith he userh to alarm souls, and to pouse them forward to

their duty.

3. Nor will they believe and receive his offers as true

4. Nor will they believe that he is the true Prophet Priest and King, that must fave souls from hell and death; and therefore they will not give him employ ment in his offices.

All which cannot but be an high provocation: for in effect, it is to lay, that he is not the Truth, por wor thy to be believed. Let them consider this, and se how they think he shall take this off their hands. N

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being the Truth. man will take it well, that another hould either call or account him a liar : and, can they think, that Christ shall take it well at their hands, to be accounted by them a liar? What will they think to be challenged for this in the great day? Now, the truth is, all unbelievers, as they make God a liar (O horrid and abominable crime! whose hair would not stand on end to hear this?

1 John 5. 10, 11. He that believetb not God, batb made bim a liar, because be believeth not the record that God gave of bis Son. And this is the record, that God bath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.) So do they make the Son of God a liar, in all his fayings, in in all his offices, and in all his works; and they make the Holy Ghoft a liar, in not believing that truth, that he hath sealed as firm truth. They make the covenant of fureriship betwixt the Father and the Son a mere lie and a forgery, O dreadful! they make the word of broth a lie, and they make all the faints liars, and all the

aints who believe it and rest upon it, liars. Fourthly, Hence is there ground of reproof to the

officers of Jesus Christ who declare this truth, and the

godly, in that,

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I. They do not firmly enough believe his fayings, either his promises nor his threatnings; as appeareth 00 off, upon the one hand, by their faintings and fears; nd, upon the other hand, by their carelefness and loose valk.

2. They make not use of him in all cases, as they ught: his offices ly by, and are not improven; nor the gone to as the Truth, in cases requiring his help d to s the Truth; that is, in cases of darkness, doubtings, onfusion, ignorance of their case and condition, and he like.

3. They do not approach to him, nor to God thro im, heartily and cordially, as the very Truth, and true Vay.

4. Nor do they reft with confidence upon him in all for ifficulties, as being the Truth, that will not fail them, or disappoint them.

5. Nor do they rejoice in him, as fatisfied with him,

ho is the Truth, in the want of all other things.

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Fifthly, The right confideration of this truth should keep us in mind of feveral great duties: such as those

of, as among Turks and Heathers; or where it is darkned with superstition and mens inventions, as among
Papists; or where it hath been clearly shiring, but now
is darkned, as in some churches now under the prevaling power of corruption; or, lastly, where it is not seceived in its power and lustre, as, alas, it is too link
received in the best and purest churches.

2. Of being thankful to him, for making this trul known in the world, and particularly in the place when we were born, or had our abode; and yet more, in that he hath determined our hearts to a believing a this truth in some weak measure, to an embracing a it, and to a giving of ourselves up to be led, ruled an

guided thereby.

3. Of esteeming bigbly of every piece of truth for his sake, who is the Truth; studying it for his sake, lovin it for his sake, holding it fast for his sake, witnessia to it as we are called for his sake: we should buy the truth, and not sell it, Prov. 22. 23. and we should plea for it, and be valiant for it, Isa. 59. 4, 14. Fer. 7. 2 & 9. 3.

2. Of taking part with him and his cause in all he zards; for truth is always on his side, and truth sha

prevail at length.

ficulties, whether, (1.) They be about some controverted points of truth, which come to be debated, at to trouble the church: or, (2.) About our own est and condition, quarrelled at by satan, or questions by the false heart: or, (3.) About our carriage in o daily walk. In all these, and the like, we should employing Truth, that we may be led in truth, a taught by truth, to walk in sure paths.

6. Of carrying in all things before him as true: for is Truth, and the Truth, and so cannot be deceive and therefore we should walk before him in sincer and singleness of heart, without guile, hypocrify falshood, that we may look like children of the truth,

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of the day, and of light, and children that will not lie or dissemble, Ifa. 63. 8. not like these that lied unto bim, Pfal. 78. 38. Ifa. 59. 13.

7. Of taking bim only for our guide to beaven, by denying our own wit, skill and understanding; and looking to and refting upon him, who alone is the Truth; and so acknowledging him in all our ways, depending on him for light and counsel, with fingleness of heart,

humility, diligence, and truth in the inward parts. .8. Of giving up ourselves daily unto him and his guidance, and denying our own wills, humours, parties or opinions; for he alone is Truth, and can only guide us aright: and, for this cause, we would acquaint oursolves well with the word, which is our rule, and seek after the Spirit, whom Christ hath promised, to lead us into all truth.

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Sixthly, Should not this be a strong inducement to all of us to lay hold on and grip to him, who is the Truth, and only the Truth? feeing,

1. All other ways which we can take will prove a

lie to us in end. 2. He is substance and no shadow, and all that love him shall inherit substance: for he will fill all their treafures, Prov. 8.21.

3. Such as embrace him shall not wander nor be milled: for his mouth fall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to his lips, Prov. 8. 7. All the words f his mouth are in righteousness, and there is nothing froward ontr onto m perverse in them, v. 8. He is wisdom, and dwelleth, at with prudence, and findeth out knowledge of witty invenions, v. 12. Counsel is bis, and found wisdom; be bath inderstanding and strength, v. 14.

4. He will make good all his promises in due time, nd give a subsistence and a being to them all; for he s the Truth, and the Truth must stand to his promises, nd fulfil them all.

5. He will never, nay never, leave his people, nor orsake them, Heb. 13. 5. He is Truth, and cannot detive; he cannot forfake nor disappoint: he is a spring water, whose waters fail not, Ifa. 58. 11. There-

General uses from Christ's fore, they cannot be disappointed in end, and perish who truff to him.

6. The Truth will make them free, John 8. 32, 36. and so deliever them from their state of fin and misery wherein they lay as captives, and from that spiritual bondage and flavery under which they were held.

Seventbly, This to believers may be a spring of con-

lolation in many cales; as,

1. When error and wickedness seem to prosper and prevail: for the it prevail for a time, yet truth will be victorious at length, and the Truth will overcome all. He is Truth, and will plead for truth.

2. When friends, acquaintances, relations fail them, and father and mother forfake them, Truth will take them up: he who is the Truth will answer his name,

and never deceive, never forfake.

3. When riches, honours, pleasures, or what elfe their heart hath been going out after, prove like fummer-brooks: for the Truth will be the same to them in all generations; there is no shadow of turning with him The Truth is always Truth, and true.

4. When we fear that either ourselves or others shall fall away in a day of trial, and turn from the truth Tho' all men prove liars and deceivers, Truth will a bide the same, and stand out all the blasts of opposition

5. When unbelief would make us question the trut of the promises, the faith of his being Truth itself, and the Truth, even Truth in the abstract, would shame un belief out of countenance. Shall Truth fail? Shall no the Truth be true? What a contradiction were that?

6. When we know not how to answer the objection of Satan, and of a falle treacherous heart: for Trus can eafily answer all cavils; and he who is the Trus can repel all objections against truth. Truth is impres

nable, and can fland against all.

7. When we cannot know nor discover the wiles at Subtilty of Satan, Truth can discover the depths of s tan, and make the poor foul more acquaint with then fo that they shall not any more be ignorant of his vices, who look to him.

8. When the thoughts of the deceitfulness of

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hearts trouble us, the depth whereof we cannot fearch; this then may comfort us, that Truth can fearch the

heart, and the reins, Fer. 17. 9, 10.

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9: When we cannot tell what our disease and distemper is, and so cannot seek suitable remedies, or help from God; O what a comfort is it, to know and believe, that he is the Truth, with whom we have to do, and so knoweth our distemper, perfectly, and all its causes and symptoms! Truth cannot be at a stand in discerning our disease; so nor can he be ignorant of the fittest and only safest cures.

not knowing what is best for us; it is comfort to remember, that we have to do with the Truth, that is perfectly acquainted with all that, and knoweth what is best.

of adversaries, it is comfortable to know that he is the Truth, that will hear truth, when men will not; and will own and stand for the truth, when enemies do what they can to darken an honest man's good cause. It is comfortable to know we have the Truth to appeal to, as David had, P(al. 7. 17.

12. When we think on our own covenant-breaking, and dealing deceitfully with God; it is comfortable to remember, that the we and all men be liars, and deal deceitfully with him, yet he is the Truth, and will keep tovenant for ever; he will not, he cannot deny him-

felf, 2 Tim. 2. 13.

Eighthly, Hence we may certainly conclude, that truth, which is Christ's cause, shall at length prevail; for he is Truth, yea the Truth, and so abideth truth; therefore must be prevail, and all the mouths of liars must be stopped. So then let us remain perswaded, that truth at length shall be victorious, and that the cause of Christ shall have the victory; tho,

I. The enemies of truth and of the cause of Christ multiplied, and many there be that rise up against it.

2. These enemies should prosper, and that for a long ime, and carry on their course of error and wickedness with a high hand.

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3. There

General ufes from Christ's

There should be few found to befriend truth, and

4. Yea, many of those that did sometime own it, and plead for it, should at length turn their back upon it, as did Demas.

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And fuch as continue conftant and faithful be loaded with reproaches, and prefied under with fore persecution, for adhering to truth, and owning conftantly the good cause.

6. Yea, tho all things in providence should feem to fay that truth shall not rife again, but seem on the con-

trary to conspire against the same.

Nintbly, May we not hence read what should be our way and course in a time when a spirit of error is gone abroad, and many are carried off their feet therewith, or when we are doubtful what to do, and what side of the dispute to take? O then is the fit time for us to emply Truth, to live near to him who is the Truth, to wait on him, and hang upon him, with singleness of heart.

Object. But many even of his own people do err and step aside. Ans. That is true: but yet, 1. That will be no excuse to thee. Nay, 2. That should make thee fear and tremble more. 3. And it should press thee to ly near to Christ, and to wrestle more earnestly with him for the Spirit of light and of truth, and to depend more constantly and faithfully upon him with singleness of heart, and to give up thy soul and ways to him as the God of Truth, and as the Truth, that thou mayst be led into all truth.

Tentbly, This should stir us up to go to him, and make use of him as the Truth, in all cases wherein we may stand in need of Truth's hand to help us: and, for this

cause, we would mind those particulars;

ignorance, blindness, hypocrify, readiness to mistake and err. This is clear and manifest, and proved to be truth by daily experience; yet, how little is it believed that it is so with us? Do we see and believe the arbeism of our hearts? do we see and believe the hypocrify of our hearts? are we jealous of them, as we ought to

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2. Let us live in the persuasion of this, that he only, and nothing below him, will be able to clear our doubts, dispel our clouds, clear up our mistakes, send us light, and manifest truth unto us: not our own study, pains, prayers, duties, learning, understanding; not ministers or professors, and experienced Christians, and the like.

3. We should be daily giving up ourselves to him, as the Truth, in all the fore-mentioned respects; and receiving him into our souls as such, that he may dwell and abide there: then shall the Truth make us free; and; if the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed, John 8. 36.

4. There would be much single dependence on him, for light, instruction, direction and guidance in all our

exigencies.

5. Withal, there would be a waiting on him with patience, giving him liberty to take his own way and time, and a leaving of him thereunto.

6. We should by all means guard against such things as are hindrances, and will prove obtacles to us, in

this matter: fuch as,

(1.) Prejudices against the truth: for then we will undervalue, slight and reject all the directions and instructions of the Spirit, as not agreeing with our prejudicate opinion.

(2.) A wilful turning away from truth, as thefe, 2 Tim.

4 4. Tit. 1. 14.

(3.) Addictedness to our own judgments and opinions, which causeth pertinaciousness, pride and conceit, as thinking ourselves so wise as that we need no infor-

mation : and this occasioneth a felf-confidence.

(4.) Looking too much unto and hanging too much upon men, who are but instruments; crying them up as infallible, and receiving, without further examination, all that they say; not like the Bereans, Acts 17. This is a great hindrance to the receiving of truth, and very prejudicial.

(5.) A neglecting of the use of the means which God

hath appointed for this end.

4.

(6.) Or

General uses from Chris's

(6.) Or an hanging too much on them, and so misplacing them, giving them his room.

(7.) Leaning too much to our own understanding, wit

and knowledge, &c.

(8.) A refifting of the Truth, 2 Tim. 3.8.

These and the like hindrances would be guarded against, lest they mar our attaining to the knowledge of truth.

7. There would be much of the exercise of prayer: for this is the main conduit, and mean, thro which light is conveyed into the soul. There would also be a serious and christian reading and hearing of the word, which is truth, and the word of truth, and the scripture of truth: And those duties would be gone about with, (1.) Much self-denial; (2.) With much singleness of heare; (3.) With much humility; (4.) With much willingness and readiness to be instructed; (5.) With much seriousness and earnestness; and, (6.) With faith and dependence on God for his blessing and breathing.

8. We would beware, as of trusting to our own understandings, so to the judgments of other men: nor would we look to what suiteth most our own humours, nor to what appeareth most specious and plausible; for

that may deceive us.

9. We would ly open to the influences and rays of light, by exercifing faith in earnest desires, as also patient waiting for and single looking to him; minding his name and his relations, promises and engagements, for the strengthning of our faith and considence.

10. We would labour to keep fast whatever he teacheth us by his word and Spirit, and not prove leaking vessels. This the apostle exhorteth to, Heb. 2. 1. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest beed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we sould let them slip. Yea, and we should be established in the truth, 2 Pet. 1.12.

11. We would beware of resting on a form of the truth, as those did, of whom we read, Rom. 2, 20, and of holding the truth in unrighteounsels, as these, Rom. 1. 18. and of disobeying it, as these mentioned, Rom. 2.8. see also Gal. 2. 1. & 5. 7.

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as that it might rule and be mafter in us, captivate judgment, will and affections, and break out into the practice. And this comprehendeth several duties, such as,

1. To have the truth in us; whileas, if we practife otherwise, the truth is not in us, 1 John 1. 8. & 2. 4.

2. To be of the truth, as belonging to its jurisdiction,

power and command, 1 John 3. 19. John 18. 37.

3. To do the truth, by having true fellowship with him, 1 John 1. 6 and to walk in the truth, 2 John 4.
3. John 4. Psal. 86. 11.

4. To have the loins girt with truth, Eph. 6. 14.

5. To receive the love of the truth, 2 Thess. 2. 10.
6. To be instructed of bim, as the truth is in Jesus,

Eph. 4. 21.

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7. To purify the foul in obeying the truth, I Pet. 1. 22. This shall suffice for clearing up, and applying in the the general, this excellent truth, That Christ is the Truth. We shall now come and make some more particular use of this precious point, by speaking to some particular cases (which we shall instance in, by which the inderstanding Christian may be helped to understand now to carry, and how to make use of Christ in other he like cases) wherein Christ is to be made use of as the Truth, and show how believers are to make use of him in these cases as the Truth.

## CHAP. XIII.

low to make use of Christ, as the Truth, for growth in

T is a commanded duty, that we grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 3. last. And the knowledge of him being life eternal, John 17.3. and our meare of knowledge of him here being but impersect, for
know but in part; it cannot but be an useful duty,
id a desirable thing, to be growing in this knowledge,
his is to walk worthy of the Lord unto alk pleasing, to be
seasing in the knowledge of God, Col. 1. 10. Knowledge
must

must be added unto virue; and it layers a ground for other christian virtues, 2 Per. 1. 5, 6. In this knowledge we must not be barren, 2 Pet. 1. 8. And this being so necessary, so desirable, and so uteful, and so advantaging

and more of it; especially seeing it is a part of the i-

Now, it is the Truth that must teach them here, first and last. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God must be had in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6. The question therefore is, How we should make use of Jesus Christ for this end, that we may attain to more of this excellent knowledge?

ous a grace, the believer cannot but defire to have more

For clearing of this, I shall propose those directions; First, It is good to live in the constant conviction of a necessary of his teaching us. And this taketh in those

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particulars;

even when we know most, or think we know most; remembring that the best knoweth but in part, 1 Cor. 13. 9. The more true knowledge we attain to, the more will we see and he convinced of our ignorance; because, the more we know, the more will we discover of the valences and incomprehensibility of that object which is proposed to our knowledge.

are, and how ready they are to fit down upon a shadow of knowledge, even when we know nothing as we ought to know, I Cor. 8. 2. and this will keep us jealous and

watchful.

hearts, and watchfulness, we would remember, that our hearts naturally are averse from any true and saving knowledge: whatever desire there be naturally after knowledge of hidden things, out of curiosity, and of things natural, or of things spiritual, as natural, so the perfection of nature, as might be pretended, where by in effect those that increase knowledge, increase forrow, Each, 1.18, yet there is no inclination after spiritual and saving knowledge in us naturally, but an a versation of heart therefrom.

for growth in knowledge.

ceffity of this knowledge; how necessary it is for our christian communion with God, and christian walk with others; how necessary for our right improving of dispensations general and particular; what a noble ornament of a Christian it is, and a necessary piece of the

image of God, which we have loft.

Secondly, Upon these grounds mentioned, we would also be convinced of this; That of ourselves, and by all our natural parts, endowments, quickness and fagacity, we cannot attain to this faving knowledge, which is a special and saving grace, and so must be wrought in the soul by a divine hand, even the mighty power of God. By our private study and reading we may attain to a literal, heady and speculative knowledge, that will puss up, 1 Cor. 9. 1. but thereby shall we never attain to this knowledge, which is spiritual, hearty and practical, and so saving. We must have the anointing here, which teacheth us all things, 1 John 2. 27. And of this we would be perswaded, that we may look to a higher hand for light and instruction.

Thirdly, There would be an eying of Christ's turniture and fitness for this work of reaching of us; to with

1. An eying of him as the substantial Wisdom of the

Father, Prov. 8.

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2. An eying of him as one come out of the bosom of the Father, John 1 18. and so sufficiently enabled to acquaint us with the mysteries of God for salvation.

3. An eying of him as Mediator, fully endued with all necessaries for this piece of his work, and so having received the Spirit without measure for this end, John 3. 34. and as having hid in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. 2. 3, and as having all fulness dwelling in him, Col. 1. 19. and also Isa. 11. 2. & 61. 1, 2.

4. An eying of him as baving power to fend the Spirit, that anointing that teacheth us all things, and is truth and is no lie, 1 John 2. 20, 27. not only by way of interceffion and intreaty, begging it of the Father, John 15. 16, 17. but also authoritatively, as conjunct with the Father. The Father sendeth him in Christ's name, John 14. 26. and Christ sendeth him from the Father,

How to make use of Christ Fohn 15. 26, and this Spirit of truth, which guideth into all truth, shall receive of Christ's, and shew it unto us, John 16. 13, 14, 15.

Fourthly, There would be an eying of Christ's readiness, willingness and lengagement to help in this case: and this will encourage the foul to go forward. And, for this cause, we would remember those things;

1. That he standeth obliged to help us with instruction, by vertue of his office, as a Prophet, a Witnels, a

Leader, and a Commander, Ila 55. 4.

2. That he is commissionated of the Father for this end, and so is the Father's servant; and is given for a light to the Gentiles, Ifa. 42, 6. & 49. 6 and the Father is faid to speak by him, or in him, Heb. I. I.

3. That he received his gifts and qualifications for this end and purpose, that he might give out and dispense to his members according to their necessity; as is clear from Pfal. 68. 18. compared with Epb. 4.8. What he is faid to have received in the one place, he is faid to have given in the other.

4. That he hath begun this work already, by his Spirit, in his followers; and therefore standeth engaged to see it perfected: for all his works are perfect

works.

5. That he hath a love to his scholars, and a defire to have them all thriving and making progress in knowledge; this being his glory, who is their Master and Teacher.

6. That he laid down ways and means, and a constant

course, for instructing of his people: for,

(1.) He hath given his word, and fettled and effablished ordinances, for this end.

(2.) He hath established a ministry for instructing his people, Eph. 4, 8, 9, 10, 13.

(3.) He hath gifted persons for this work of the mi-

niftry, 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11.

(4.) He backeth these officers in the faithful administration of their function, and, thro' his bleffing and Spirit, maketh their work prosperous and effectual in his own, as he leeth ht.

Fifthly, There would be an eying of the promises of

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the covenant of grace made for this end, whether general, or particular, or both: such as those which we have, i.a. 11. 9. Habak. 2. 14. The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (or of the glory of the Lord) as the waters cover the sea: and that, Isa. 32. 4. The heart of the rash shall understand knowledge, &ce. and fer. 31. 34. They shall all know me, &c.

Sixtbly, There would be a constant, diligent, serious and single using of the means of knowledge, with a faithful dependence on Christ by faith, gripping to him in his relations, offices, engagements and promises, and waiting upon his breathing, in hope and patience, Psal.

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Seventbly, There would be a guarding against every thing that may obstruct this work, and grieve him in it: and therefore we would beware,

1. To undervalue and have a little effeem of knowledge: for this will grieve him, and, to speak so, put

him from work.

2. To misimprove any measure of knowledge he giveth.

3. To weary of the means and ordinances whereby

he useth to convey knowledge in to the foul.

4. To limit the holy One of Israel to this or that mean, to this or that time, or to this or that measure, who should have a latitude as to all these.

5. To despise the day of small things, because we get

not more.

6. To be too curious in feeking after the knowledge of hidden mysteries, the knowledge whereof is not to necessary.

7. To lean too much unto, and to depend too much upon, the ordinances or instruments, as if all or any

thing could come from them.

Eighthly, There would be a right improving of any measure of knowledge we get, to his glory and to the edification of others, with humility and thankfulness; and so a putting of that talent in use, to gain more to his glory: whatever measure of knowledge we get, we should in all haste put it into practice, and set it to work; so shall it increase, and engage him to give more.

Eas . How to make uft of Christ

Aructions, and to the shinings of the Spirit of light and of truth, and a ready receiving of what measure he is pleased to grant or insuse. Which includes those duties:

. A ferious and earnest hungring and thirsting after

more spiritual knowledge.

2. A diligent use of every approven mean for this end.

3. A going about the means which much felf-denial, spirituality, singleness of heart and sincerity, looking to and depending upon him, who must breathe upon the means, and make them useful.

4. A greedy receiving, drinking in, and treasuring

up in the foul, what is gotten.

5. A guarding against felfish and by-ends, with a fin-

gle eying of his glory.

6. A guarding against pride in the heart, and a studying of humility and meckness; for the meek will be quide in judgment, and the meek will be teach his way, Psal. 25. 9.

hand, together with the truth that is heard and received, that he may write the truth in the heart, and cause

the heart receive the impression of that truth.

Tentbly, There would be a rolling of the whole matter by faith on him as the only Teacher; a putting of the ignorant, blockish, averse and perverse heart into his hand, that he may frame it to his own mind; and a leaving of it there, till he by his Spirit write in it what he thinketh meet, to his own glory, and our good.

And fure, were this way followed, growth in know

ledge would not be fo rare a thing as it is.

#### CAUTIONS.

For further direction and caution in this matter, the believer would take notice of these particulars;

thowledge he hath attained to, or can attain to here as if he had enough, and should labour for no more

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2. Whenever he is about any mean of knowledge. fuch as preaching, reading, conference, &c. his heart fhould be only upon Christ; he should be hanging on his lips for a word of instruction, and with greedings looking for a word from his mouth; he would be fending many posts to heaven, many ejaculatory defires for light and understanding, and that with fingleness and fincerity, and not for bale ends, or our of hypocrify.

2. Let him not think that there is no growth in knowledge, because possibly he perceiverhit not, or is not fatisfied as to the measure thereof, yea, tho' possibly he perceiveth more ignorance than ever he did before: if he grow in the knowledge of his own ignorance, it is a growth of knowledge not to be despised. And in a manner, what can we elfe know of God, but that he far transcendeth all our knowledge, and that he is an in-

comprehensible One in all his ways?

4. Let him not think that there is no growth in knowledge, because he perceiveth not a growth in the knowledge of fuch or fuch a particular which he defireth most; for, if there be a growth in the knowledge of other particulars necessary to be known, there is no reafon to complain. If one grow not, as he supposeth. in the knowledge of God, and of the mysteries of the gospel; yet, if he grow in the discovery of the treachery and wickedness of his own heart, he cannot say that

he groweth not in knowledge.

5. Let him not measure his growth in knowledge, by his growth in the faculty of speaking and discoursing of fuch or fuch points of religion: many measure their knowledge by their tongue, and think they know little because they can express little; and so they think they attain to no increase or growth in knowledge, because they perceive no growth or increase in this faculty of discoursing and talking of such or such points of truth. It is fafer to measure their knowledge by the impression that the Truth hath on their spirits, and the effects of it on all their carriage, than by their ability or skill to talk and dispute of it. 6. Let

How to make use of Christ

6. Let them beware to imagine that they shall be able to fearch out the Almighty unto perfection. Canft thou (faid Zopbar, Job 11. 7, 8, 9.) by fearching find out God? Canft thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as beaven, what canft thou do? deeper than bell, what canft thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the fea. Or that they shall be able ever to win to the bottom of their own falle deceitful heart, which, as Jeremiab faith, chap. 17.9. is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? and which is God's prerogative alone to fearch and try, v. 10. Neither let them think, fo long as they are here, to win to an exact and perfect knowledge of the mysteries of God, wherein is the manifold wisdom of God, Eph. 3. 10. which very Principalities and powers in beavenly places are learning, and which the angels are poring and looking into with defire, I Pet. I. 12. There is no perfection in knowledge to be had here; for here the best but knoweth in part, and prophesieth in bart, I Cor. 12.4.

7. Let them not think that every one shall have the same measure of knowledge: every one hath not the like use for it, or the like capacity for it; there is a measure proportioned to every one. They should not then complain, because they have not such a measure of knowledge as they perceive in some others; it may be, the Lord hath some harder piece of service, which calleth for more knowledge, to put others to. Let every one then mind his duty faithfully and conscientiously, and let him not quarrel with God, that he attaineth not to fuch a measure of knowledge as he feeth others at-

8. Neither let them think that the same by rearrequired of all: for more is required of some, by rearrequired of God, be-8. Neither let them think that the same measure is ion of their office and charge in the house of God, being called to teach and instruct others, than of others; and so more is required of such as have larger capacitated ties, and a better taculty of understanding than others 12. who naturally are but of a narrow reach, and of a shall low capacity: more also is required of such as live un dould der plain, powerful and lively ordinances, and unde er the

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for growth in knowledge. amore powerful and spiritual dispensation of the grace of God, than of others, that want fuch advantages So likewife, more is required of old Christians, than of new beginners; old men, of much and long experience.

should know more than such as are but babes in Christ. and of yefferday.

that back again to Cori 9. Let their defires run out after that knowledge. not which putteth up (for there is a knowledge which uffeth up, 1 Cor. 8. 1.) but which humbleth, and driveth the foul further from isfelf, and marer to

Christ.

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10. They would carefully diftinguish betwist the fift of knowledge, and the grace of knowledge. That ordinarily puffeth up; this humbleth: that bringeth not the foul to Jesus; this doth: that is but a form, Rom. 2. 20. and doth not retain God, Rom. 1. 28. this s a real thing, laying hold on God, and holdeth him. aft, having the fear of the Lord for its principle; for his fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, Job 28.28. fal. 111. 10. Prov. 1. 7. & 9.10. That lieth moft in he head, and venteth most in discourses, words, yea, nd fometime evanifheth into vain notions; but this oeth down to the heart, and lodgeth there, and ap-eareth in the man's walk and convertation. As these wo would be diffinguished, so the one should not be neasured by the other.

11. When they do not profit indeed, let them beare of quarrelling with Christ, or of blaming him in my manner of way; but let them lay the blame of their port-coming on themselves, for not making more use him by faith and fingle dependence upon him. true, none will be so bold as in words to quarrel ith or blame him; yet the heart is deceitful, and rately may raise and foment such thoughts of him, nd his dispensations, as can pass under no other notion han a quarrelling with him. Now, these would be parded against.

12. Beware of urging for or expecting of immediate relations, or extraordinary manifestations; for we ould not tempt the Lord, nor let limits to him: neimust should we preferibe means and ways to him; we 22d How to make use of Christ as Truth, south be latisfied with the ordinary means which he hath appointed, and wait at wisdom's doors, with our ears mailed to his posts.

well to give that back again to Christ, to keep for them against a time of need, and wait on him for grace to

against a time of need, and wait on him for grace to improve it for his glory.

14. Let them beware of minding things to high, Plat.

131: It is better to fear and frand in awe, and to feek to lay the foundations well, to get the faving knowledge of things necessary to falvation. This will yield most peace and fatisfaction.

### CHAP. XIV.

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How to make use of Christ, as Truth, for comfort, who truth is oppressed and born down.

Here is another difficulty, wherein believing fou will fland in need of Chrift, as the Truth, to help them; and that is, when his work is overturned his cause born down, truth condemned, and enemis in their opposition to his work, prospering in all the wicked attempts. This is a very trying dispensation as we fee it was to the holy penman of Pfal. 73. for made him to flagger, to that his feet were almost go and his fleps had well nigh flipt; yea, he was almost to penting of his being a godly person, saying, v. 13. Va b I bave cleanfed my beart in vain, and walked my bat in invocency. It was fomething like this which ma Jesemy fay, Chap. 8. 18. When I would comfort my against forrow, my beart is faint in me. The barvest w past, and the summer was ended, and yet they were faced, ver. 20. and they looked for peace, but no & came; and for a time of bealth, but behold trouble, 15, and this was fainting and vexatious. And w made Barach, Jeremiab's faithful companion in tribu tion, fay, Wo is me now; for the Lord bath added & so my forrow: I fainted in my fighing, and I find no Jer. 45. 3: but this, that all things were turning up

down? God was breaking down that which he had built and plucking up that which he had planted. Tribulation and fuffering for a good cause is even fainting to some; as the apostle hinterh, £96. 3. 13. when he says, nath eart hatde Wherefore I defire that we faint not as my cribulation for you find that which evinceth the danger of this dispensar hem e to on is the fainting and backfliding of many in fach time of trial, as fad experience too often cleareth. Pfd. Now, the believer's fray in this case must be the Rock feek f ages, Jefus, the Truth. It is he alone who can keep edge traight and honest in such a reeling time; so that a molt ight of Christ, as the Truck, in reference to the carryng on of truth in the earth, and throughing his cause nd work, will be the only support of a foul shaken y fuch a piece of trial. But the question is, How should believers make use Christ in such a time, to the end they may be kept from fainting and fuccumbing in fuch a fform? To thich I answer, That the faith and confideration of fou bole particulars would help to establishment; tb, t 1. That Christ, in all this great work of redemption, rned nd in every piece of it, is the Father's Servant. So emic he frequently called his Servant, 1/4. 42. 1. & 49. 3. the 6. & 52. 13. 8. 33. 11. Zeeb. 3. 8. and therefore ation his work is a work intrufted to him, and he flandeth for gon off r gaged as a fervant to be faithful to his truft. Moreer, add to this, that he hath a commission to perfect. at work; and we need not doubt but he, who is the Va uth, will be true to his trust. Him bath God the Pabas er feated, John 6. 27. and he oft rells us himself, that is fent of the Father, John 4. 34. & 5. 25, 24, 30, 37. & 6. 38, 39, 40, 44, 47. & 8. 16, 18. & 12. ma myf f o 45, 49. 8 7.16. 8 9. 4. 8 10. 36. 8 11. 42 76 2. That, while he was upon the earth, he fi 10 8 at work that was committed to him to finish here, ha e, V g purchased all that was to be bought by his blood ying all the price that justice did ask, ribu so, by which price he hath purchased a people so 1 8 mielf, Rev. 5.9. Lake 1. 68. So that his work, cause 200 interest is a purchased work, bought with the bl That his refurrection and

228 How to make use of Christ as Truth, doubted proof of this, that justice is satisfied, and that the price is fully paid; and also that his exaltation at the Father's right hand is a fure evidence and ground of hope, that he shall at last triumph over all his enemies, and that his work of truth shall prosper. The Father faid to him, Rfal. 110. I. Sit thou on my right band, un til I make thine enemies thy footfool. Being highly exalted, he hath got a name above every name, that at bis name every knee fould bow, of things in beaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that ever

tongue should confess, that Jefus Christ is Lord, to the glon of God the Father, Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.

a. That the Father standerh engaged to make good to him all that was promised, and to give him all the he purchased, Isa. 53. 10, 11, 12 Christ having no fulfilled his undertaking, by making his foul an offering for fin, and fo fatisfying justice, which is openly decla red by his referrection, and admission to glory as the head of his elect, is to expect the accomplishment what was conditioned unto him. His work therefor on the earth must prosper; and the Father bath un dertaken to fee it prosper. Sure the faith of the would much support a poor foul, staggering at the thoughts of the prosperity of the wicked, and of the

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That Christ himself is now throughly furnished and enabled for the carrying on of his work, over the belly of all adversaries; for all power in beaven 4 earth is given to him, Mat. 28. 18. and every knee muft b to bim, Phil. 2. 10. All judgment is committed unto bit John 5. 22, 27. Angels, powers and authority are ma subjett unto bim, 1 Pet. 2, 22. Yea, all things are un bim, Eph. 1. 22. How then can his work miscarry? who can hinder that truth should not flourish in

6. That Christ is actually at work, employing power for the carrying forward of his defign, for glory of the Father, and for his own glory, and the good of his poor people. The Father work by him, and he by the Spirit, who is his great gerent, fent from the Father and from him; and doubted

when truth is oppressed.

work is to glorify the Son, and thalf receive of his and

show it unto us, John 16. 14.

7. That Christ, upon many accounts, standeth engaged to perfect this work which he hath begun and is about. His honour is engaged to go thorow, feeing now he is fully furnished for it, and hath all the creation at his command. He must then perfect his work as to the application, as well as he did perfect it as to the purchate: his love to his Father's and his own glory, and to his own peoples good and falvation, may affire us that he will not leave the work unperfected; and his power and furniture may give us full fecurity that no stop which his work meeteth with shall be able to hinder it.

8. That hence it is clear and manifest, that his wheel s in the midst of the wheels of men, and that therefore he is ordering all their motions and reelings to the best. His wheel keepeth an even pace, and mowith equally and equably, in the midft of mens contrary

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9. And that therefore all the excentrick and irreguar motions of devils and wicked men, being in his hand, nd ordered by him, cannot hinder but further his end; o that even enemies, while oppoling and feeking to detroy the cause and interest of Christ, that his name and ruth should no more be mentioned, are promoving his work. His wheel is the great wheel that ordereth all he leffer and subordinate wheels, whatever contrary potions they may have the one to the other, and all or pany of them may feem to have to this great wheel; fo hat, do they what they will, the work of our Lord oeth on: their opposition is setting his work forward, they intend the contrary; however their faces look, ney row to the port he would be at. This is an un. oubted truth, and confirmed in all ages, and yet is not imly believed; and a truth it is, which, if believed, ould do much to fettle our flaggering fouls in a fformy

10. That at laft he shall come to be glorified in bis faints, Theff. 1. 10. when be fall be revealed from beaven ith all bis mighty angels, ver. 7. Then shall it be feen

ofe countel thall fland, his or mens; and whate work hall profper, his or Satan's

GAUTIONS

Yet let me add a few words for caution and direction perc.

1. The confideration of those things mentioned should not make us flacken our diligence in prayer and other duties; and, when they are aright confidered, they rill rather prove a four and a good in our fide to fer u

forward, than a bridle to hold us aback.

2. We would not think that Christ's work and intereft is going backward always when it feemeth fo to u. Even when he is casting down what he hath built up and plucking up what he hath planted, his work is prospering; for all that is in order to the laying of a beter foundation, and to the carrying on of a more glorious work, when he shall lay all the flones with fair a lours, and the foundations with Japphires, and make the windows of cryftal, &cc. Ifa. 54-11, 12.

2. Tho his work be always going on, and his truth prospering; yet we would not think that it will always prosper alike in our apprehensions. Many times we judg by rules of our own making, and not by the rule truth; and hence it is that we militake oftentimes. W walk little by faith, and too much by fenfe; and hend

we judge too much by fense, and fo pass a wrong judg

ment, to his dishonour, and the sadning of our on hearts.

4. Nor would we think that his truth and interest ruined and gone, because it is fore oppressed in this that particular place of the world; as if his work we not of an universal extent, and in all the churches. his truth thrive and prosper in some other place of the world, shall we not say that his kingdom is coming? shall we limit all his work and interest to one small pa of the world?

s. We would not think the worle of his work, b cause it is carried on with so many stops, and doth me with fo many impediments in its way. We are not a quainted with the depths of his infinite wildow a counsel; and so we see not what noble ends he hath b

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fore him, in futering those unpediments to by in the way of his charlot: we think he should ride to triumphantly all alongs, that none should once dare to cast the least block in his way; but we judge carnally, as unacquainted with the many noble and glorious designs which he hath in ordering matters. As himself was for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; so will he have the way of the carrying on of his work prove, in his holy and spotless justice, a stumbling stone to many; that shall stumble thereat, and fall, and never rise any more.

6. We would beware to think that Christ hath forgotten his work, because he seemeth to take no notice of
our prayers which we are putting up now and then for
his work. He may be doing that which we are desiring,
in the general, and yet not let us know that he is answering our prayers; and that for wise and holy ends, to
keep us humble and diligent. He may seem to missegard
our suits, and yet be carrying on his work, and granting

us our defires upon the matter,

7. Hence we should beware of desponding, and growing heartless and faint, when we see sew owning truth, or standing upon Christ's side; for he needeth not man's help to carry on his work, tho he sometimes thinkerh good to condescend so far as to honour some to be instrumental in setting of it forward, who yet have nothing but as he giveth. Let us not then think that his work cannot prosper, because great ones and mean ones oppose it, and such as would stand for it, and own it, are but sew and fainting, without strength, courage or zeal.

#### CHAP. XV.

How to make use of Christ for stedfastness, in a time when truth is oppressed and born down.

When enemies are prevailing, and the way of truth is evil spoken of, many faint, and many turn a-fide, and do not plead for truth, nor stand up for the interest of Christ, in their hour and power of darkness;

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m at ath b many are overcome with bale fear, and either fide with the workers of iniquity, or are not valiant for the truth but, being faint-hearted, turn back. Now, the thoughts of this may put some, who desire to stand fast, and to own him and his cause in a day of trial, to enquire how they shall make use of Christ, who is the Tenth, so as to be enabled to stand in the day of temptations and to keep fast by truth, when it is loaded with reproaches, and buried under an heap of abloquy. For satisfaction to this question, I shall shortly point out those directions, which, if followed, may prove helpful to keep the soul from fainting, misbelieving, doubting, quarrelling at the Lord's dispensations, and from yielding to the temptations in such a day.

1. The believer would live in the conviction of his hazard thro' the fleight of Satan, the ffrength of the temptation, the wickedness and treachery of the heart, the evil example of others, and the want of fanctified courage, zeal and resolution; and this will keep the soul humble, and far from boaffing of its own strength, which

was Peter's fault.

2. They would live in the faith and perswasion of this, That it is Christ alone, who is the Truth, who can help them to stand for truth in a day of temptation; and that all their former purposes, yows, resolutions, solemn professions, and the like, will prove but weak cables to hold them fast in a day of storm; and that only the Rock of ages must save them; and their being a leyward of him, and partaking of his warm and safe protection, will do their business: that all their stock of grace and knowledge, and that confirmed with resolutions and sincere purposes, will help but little in that day; and that new influences of grace and truth from the sountain, that is full of grace and truth, will only prove establishing to the soul, and confirm it in the truth in that day.

3. Therefore they would eye Christ in his officer; particularly as the great Prophet, who can teach as never man taught; so teach, as to make the soul receive the doctrine, and to hold it fast, to receive it in love, and lay it up in the heart as a rich and enriching treasure.

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4. They would eye him in his relations unto his people, as their Head, Husband, Brother, Lader, Commander, Captain, &c. for those give ground of approaching unto him with confidence, in the day of darkness and mists, for light and direction, and for strength and courage in the day of temptation; and give ground of hope of help in that day of trial and difficulty.

J. They would eye and act faith upon the promifer of affifiance and through-bearing in the day of calamity-fuch as those, if a. 43. 2. When then passess through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the river; shey shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burns; neither shall the stame kindle upon thee. And, Isa. 41.12. For I the Love they God will hold they right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will bely thee. And particularly, they would eye the promises of light in the day of darkness. See Isa. 58. 8, 10. & 60. 20.

6. They would look on Christ as an exalted Conqueror, now risen and glorified; as a victorious Captain that hath fought and overcome; that they, as his followers, may be made partakers of his victory and conquest, and o reap the fruit of his refurrection and afcention, in heir establishment in the truth, when it is born down ind questioned, yea, and condemned by men. He apode fledfast and unmoveable in the midst of all the forms that blew in his face: and as he came to bear vitness to the truth, so did he faithfully and zealoufly vow truth, even to the death; and in death got the ictory of the arch liar and deceiver. Now, the belie, er would eye this, for the strengthning of his faith and ope of victory also thro' him; and therefore would vait patiently for his help, and not make hafte: for they pho believe make not bufte, Ifa. 28, 16. knowing that he true and faithful, and will not disappoint his followers hat trust in him. And moreover, it would be of adantage to them, in this case, to eye that gracious and omfortable word, John 14. 19. Because I live, you all live alfo: And fo by faith conclude, that feeing hrift now liverh, as a Conqueror over darkness, unth, reproaches, caldinnies, and opposition of liars,

a, of the father of lies; they, thro him, shall also we, and ride out that florm; and this will give much mage to the foul to endure temptation, and to wait in rience for an outgate.

7. They would fludy much, and fluck at, the grand promife of his coming again, and of finally dispelling all clouds, and of fully clearing up his glorious truths, that are now covered over with abloquy, and buried un-der reproaches: and this will encourage the foul to thand to truth in the midft of all opposition, believing that at length truth, how much foever opposed now, shall be victorious.

8. They should be fingle in their dependence on him for firength and through-bearing in that day of trial; not leaning to their own understanding, but acknowledging him in all their enays, Prov. 3. 6. and when they fee no hope of outgate in the world, nor appearance of the clearing up of the day, they would comfort themselves, and encourage themselves in the Lord, as David did in

a great firait, I Sam, 20. 6. . 9. Upon the forementioned grounds, they would cast all the care of their through-bearing on him, who caseth for them, 1 Pet, 5. 7. rolling all their difficulties on him, confulting only with him and his word, and not with fieth and blood; and to they would commit their ways to him, who disposeth of all things as he seeth good; forbearing to limit the holy One of Ifrael, or to quarrel with him for any thing he doth; and patiently wait for his outgate and delivery.

10. It were good, in this time of trial, to be remembring the worth of truth, and entertaining high thoughts of the smallest piece of truth that is questioned, for his fake who is the Truth; that a fight of the glorious worth thereof may make them account the less of all they can lose in the defence and maintenance thereof,

11. So were it good at this time, when truths come to be questioned, to be lying near to the Truth for light and to be keeping fast what he by his Spirit clearet up to be truth, tho the light should not be so full as to dispel all objections. This were to depend upon his for light, with fingleness of heart, and in godly simpli

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firy and facerity to follow his direction and earth, the it should not shine so bright as they would with.

CAUTIONS.

A few words of caution will be useful here also: as, 1. The believer, tho' taking this course, would not think to be altogether free of seas of stepping aside in less or in more: God may think good to let much of this abide, to the end he may be kept watchful, tender and diligent; for sear maketh the soul circumspect and watchful, and this is a good preservative from description.

2. Nor would the believer think that hereby he shall be kept altogether free of fainting. The heart now and then, thro' fear and misbelief, may fall into a fit of fainting, and think all is gone; and yet he may carry poor souls thorow, and make his strength perfect in their weakness, 2 Cor. 12, 9, that, when they are supported and carried through the temptation, they may sing praise to him, and not ascribe any thing to themselves; remembring how often they were fainting, and almost giving over the cause as desperate and hopeless.

3. They would not think it ftrange, if, in the time of their wreftling with difficulties, the Lord hide his face from them, and give them not that joyful accels unto him in prayer that sometimes they have met with: for the Lord may see it sit, to put them to this point of trial among the rest, to see if the love of his glory and truth will keep them standing, when shey want the encouragements that might be expected in that way; and if pure conscience to the command and authority of God will keep from siding with an evil way, when the soul is destitute of all sensible encouragement both from within and from without.

4. In all this business, believers would carry singly with an eye to God's glory; and would not be acted with self-ends, or drawn by carnal and selfy motives. They would not desire stability and through bearing to be seen of men, or to gain applause and the praise of men; less God be provoked to leave them to themselves, and they at length come off with discredit, as Peter did. Therefore they would strive against these

earnal motions of the heart, and labour for spirituality, fingleness of heart, and truth in the inward parts, which the Lord desireth, Plat. 51. 6.

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How to make use of Christ as the Truth, when error prevalleth, and the spirit of error carriesh many away.

Here is a time when the spirit of error is going abroad, and truth is questioned, and many are led away with delusions: for Satan can change himself into an angel of light, and make many great and fair like pretensions to holiness, and under that pretext wher in untruths, and gain the consent of many unto them; so that, in such a time of temptation, many are stolen off their seet, and made to depart from the right ways of God, and to embrace error and delusions, instead of truth. Now the question is, How a poor believer shall make use of Christ, who is the Truth, for keeping him stedfast in the truth in such a day of trial, and from embracing the way of error, how plausible soever it may appear? For satisfaction to this, we shall propose those few things:

1. In such a time, when a spirit of error is let loose and rageth, and carrieth several away, it were good for all, who would be kept straight and honest, to be walking in fear. It is not good to despise such a sly and subtile enemy, especially in the hour and power of darkness. Then all are called to be on their guard, and to stand upon their watch-tower, and to be jealous of their corrupt hearts, that are ready enough of their own accord to drink in error, and to receive the tempta-

tion at any time, and much more then.

ability to dispute for truth, will keep them stedsal, if there be not more; for, if the temptation grow, they may come to reason and dispute themselves out of all their former knowledge and skill. The father of lies is a cunning sophister, and knoweth how to shake their grounds, and cast all loose.

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2. They would renew their covenant-grips of Christ. and make fure that main bufinels, viz. their peace and union with God in Christ, and their accepting of Christ for their Head and Husband. They would labour to have the foundation fure, and to be united unto the chief Corner-stone; that so, blow the storm as it will, they may ride fafely; and that hereby they may have access to Christ with boldness in their difficulty, and may with confidence feek light from him in the hour

of darkness.
4. To the endt they may be kept more watchful and circumspect, they would remember, that it is a dishonourable thing to Christ, for them to step aside in the least matter of truth; the denying of the least point of truth is a confequential denying of him who is the Truth; and to lose a foot in the matters of truth, is very dangerous; for, who can tell when they, who once flip a foot, shall recover it again? and who can tell how many and how dreadful errors they may drink in, who have once opened the door to a small error? Therefore they would beware of tampering in this matter, and to admit any error upon the account that it is a small and inconfiderable one: there may be an unfeen concatenation betwixt one error and another, and betwixt a small one and a greater one, so as, if the little one be admitted and received, the greater shall follow; and it may be feared that if they once dally with error, and make a gap in their consciences, that God give them up to judicial blindness, that, ere all be done, they shall embrace that opinion which fometime they feemed to hate

5. They would eye the promises suiting that case; viz. the promises of God's guiding the blind by a sway which they know not; of making darkness light before them. and crooked things ftraight, Ifa. 42. 16. and of guiding continually, Ifa. 58, 11. fee also Ifa. 49. 10. & 57. 18. and they would act faith on these and the like premises, as

6. articularly, they would fix their eye upon that principal promise of the Spirit of truth, to guide into all Trate doub we feet high, end-Elever nad John Start

7. With fingleness of hearr they would depend on Christ, and wait for light from him, and beware of preidice at the truth: with fingleness of heart they would sen to his infructions, and to the influences of his light and direction, and receive in the beams of his diwine light; and thus go about duties, oft. prayer, conference, preaching, reading, &c. with an eye fixed on him, and with a foul open to him, and free of all fin-

ful pre-engagement and love to error.

8. With fingleness of heart they would give up their Souls to Christ as the Truth, that he would write the truth in their fouls, and frame their fouls unto the truth, and unto that truth which is most questioned, and by which they are most in hazard to be drawn away; and urge and prefs him, by prayer and supplication, to do the duty of an Head, an Husband, Guide and Commander, &c, unto them; and that he would be a light unto them in that day of darkness, and not fuffer them to dishonour him, or prove scandalous to others, by departing from the truth, and embracing of error. A ferious fingle-hearted dealing with him, upon the grounds of the covenant-promiles, and his relations and engagements, might prove fleadable in this case, if accompanied with a lying open to the influences of truth, and to the light of information which he is pleased to send by the Spirit of truth.

Cautions and Directions.

For further clearing of this matter, we shall hint at some cautions, and further directions useful here; fuch as.

1. They would beware of thinking that God fhould come to them with light and instruction in an extraordinary manner, and reveal the truth of the queltion conproverted fomewhat immediately: for this were a manifelt sempting and limiting the holy One of Ifrael. We must be fatisfied with the means of inftruction which he hath provided, and run to the low and to the testimony. We have the feriptures, which are able to make the man of God perfes and throughly furnished unto all good works, 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17. and to make evife unto faloation, ver. 15. There must we seek light, and there must we wait

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for the breathing of his Spirit with life, and coming with light to clear up truth to us: for they are the fortuing plants of truth, Dan. 10. 21. and the saw of the Lord, which is perfell, conversing the foal; and the communication of the Lord, that is pure, inlightning the eyes, dec. P/al. 19. 7, 8. We have the ministry, which God hath also appointed for this end, to make known to us his mind: there must we wait for him and his light. Thus must we wait at the posts of wisdom's doors, and wait for the King of light in his own was wherein he hath appointed us to wait for him. And, as he think good to come another way more immediate, let him always be welcome; but let not us limit him, nor prescribe ways to him, but follow his directions.

2. When any thing is born in upon their fpirit, as a truth to be received, or as an error to be rejected, more immediately, they would beware of admitting of every fuch thing without trial and examination: for we are expressy forbidden to believe every spirit, and com-manded to try them whether they are of God or not, 1 John 4. 1. The Lord will not take it ill that even his own immediate motions and revelations be tried and examined by the word; because the word is given us for this end, to be our reft and flandard of truth. The way of immediate revelation is not the ordinary way now of God's manifefting his mind to his people: he hath now chosen another way, and given us a more fure word of prophecy than was even a voice from heaven, as Peter faith, 2 Pet. 1. 18, 19. It is commended in the Bereaus, Acts 17. 11. who upon this account were more noble than those of Theffalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the seripures daily, exherber shofe things evere for Even Paul's words, the he was an authorized and infallible apostle of Christ's, are here put to the touchstone of the word. Many falle prophets may go out, and deceive many, and speak great swelling words of vanity, 1 John 4.1. 2 Pet. 2. 18. and the devil can transchange himself into an angel of light, 2 Cor. 11. 14. And the an angel out of heaven should preach any other thing than what is in the written word, we poght not to receive his doctrine.

doctrine, but to make afe of Christ, doctrine, but to reject it, and so account him accurred Gal. I. S. So that the written word must be much studied by us; and by it must we try all motions, all dostrines, all inspirations, all revelations; and all manifestations.

tions, eye out grintdyling 3. Much more would they beware of thinking that the dictates of their conscience oblige them, so as that always they must of necessiry follow the same. Confcience, being God's deputy in the foul, is to be followed no further than it speaketh for God, and according to truth. An erring conscience, tho it bind so far, as that he who doth contrary to the dictates thereof finneth against God, in that knowing no other than that the dictates of conscience are right, and consonant to the mind of God, yer date counteract the fame, and thus formally rebel against God's authority; yet it doth not oblige us to believe and to do what it afferteth to be truth and duty. It will not then be enough for them to lay, My conscience, and the light within me, speaketh so, and instructeth me lo: for that light may be darkness, and error and delution, and so no rule for them to walk by, To the law and to the testimony : and, if their conscience, mind, or light within them, freak not according to this avord, it is because there is no light in them, Isa. 8. 20. I grant, as I faid, they cannot without in counteract the dictates even of an erring conscience; because they know not better, but that these dictates are according to truth; and thus an erring conscience is a most dangerous thing, and bringerh people under a very fad dilemma, that, whether they follow it or not, they fin: and there is no other remedy here, but to lay by the erring conscience, and ger a conscience rightly informed by the word; putting it in Christ's hand, to be better formed and informed, that fo, it may do its office better. This then would be especially guarded against; for it once they lay down this for a principle, that whatever their conscience and mind or inward light (as some call it) dictate must be followed, there is no delusion, how falfe, how abominable foever it be, but they may be at length in hazard to be drawn away with; and lothe rule, that they will walk by, be nothing in effect but

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the spirit of lies and of delusion, and the motions and dictates of him who is the father of lies, that is, the devil.

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4. Such as pretend fo much to walk by conscience, would take heed that they take not that for the dictate of conscience, which really is but the dictate of their own humours, inclinations, pre-occupied minds, and byaffed wills. When conscience speakerh, it groundeth on the authority of God, whether truly or falfly, and proposeth such a thing to be done, or to be refrained from, merely because God commandeth that, and forbiddeth this, the fometimes it mistaketh: but, the the dictates of mens humours, inclinations, pre-occupied judgments and wills, may pretend God's authority for what they fay, yet really some carnal respect, selfish end, and the like, lieth at the bortom, and is the chief spring of that motion. And also the dictates of humour and biassed wills are usually more violent and fierce than the dictates of conscience; for, wanting the authority of God to back their affertions and prescriptions, they must make up that with an addition of a preternatural force and frength. Hence fuch as are purely led by conscience, are pliable, humble, and ready to hear and receive information; whereas others are headsfrong, and pertinacious, unwilling to receive instruction, or to hear any thing contrary to their minds, left their conscience, receiving more light, speak with a higher voice against their inclinations and former ways, and so create more trouble to them; whileas now they enjoy more quiet within, so long as the cry of their felf-will and biassed judgment is to loud, that they cannot well hear the still and low voice of conscience.

5. They would labour for much self-denial and fincerity, and to be free from the snares and power of
selfish ends, as credit, a name and applause, or what
of that kind, that may be like the fear of man that bringab a snare, Prov. 29. 25. for that will be like a gift,
that blindeth the eyes of the wise, Exod. 23. 8. Love to
carry on a party, or a design to be seen and accounted
some body, to maintain their credit and reputation, less
they be accounted changelings, and the like, will prove

very dangerous in this case: for these may forcibly care
ry the soul away to embrace one error after another, and
one error to strengthen and confirm another, that it is
hard to know where or when they shall stand; and these
by respects may so forcibly drive the soul forward, that
he shall neither hear the voice of conscience within, nor
any instruction from without.

6. They would fludy the word of truth, without prejudice and any finful pre-engagement, left they be made thereby to wiredraw and wrest the word, to their own destruction; as some, of whom Peter speaketh, 2 Pet. 3. 16. It is a dangerous thing to fludy the word with a prejudicate opinion, and to bow or wiredraw the word, and make it speak what we would have it speak, for the confirmation of our opinions and sentiments: for that is but to mock God and his law, and to fay, Let his law speak what it will, I will maintain this opinion; and fo make the word speak as we would have it, or elfe lay it by. This is to walk by some other rule than the word, and to make the word ferve our lufts, and confirm our errors than which a greater indignity cannot be done to the Spirit of truth, speaking in the word.

be much fingle dependence on the Spirit for light; waiting for clearness from him, whom Christ hath promifed to lead us into all truth. An earnest wrestling with him for his assistance, inlightning the mind with divine light to understand the truth, and inclining the soul to a ready embracing and receiving of the truth declared

in the word.

8. Tho' one place of scripture be enough to confirm any point of truth, and ground sufficient for us to believe what is there said, there being nothing in scripture but what is truth; yet in such a time of abounding errors, and when many are going abroad speaking perverse things to lead the simple away, it were spiritual wisdom to be comparing scripture with scripture, and not to be lightly embracing whatever may seem probable, and sairly deducible from some one passage or other of scripture, but to be comparing that with other passages, and see

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what concord there is: for this is certain, whatever point contradicteth other clear and manifest testimonies of scripture cannot be true, however a cunning sophister may make it feem very probably to flow out of fuch or fuch a pallage of scripture. The testimony of the Spirit is uniform, and free from all contradictions: and therefore we must see if such an affertion, that some would draw from fuch a passage, agree with other plain passages; and, if not, be sure that that is not the meaning of the place. When the devil did wrest and abuse that passage of truth, Pfal. 91. 11. He shall give bis angels charge concerning thee, &c. and from thence would infer that Christ might cast himself down, Mat. 4.6, Christ thews that this inference was bad, because it did not gree with other divine testimonies, particularly not with that, Dent. 6. 16. Thou Chalt not tempt the Lord thy God : and thereby he teacheth us to take this course in times of temptation, and fo compare spiritual things with spiritual, as Paul Speaketh, I Cor. 2. 13. Especially they would beware of expounding clear scriptures by such as re more dark and mysterious. See 2 Pet. 3. 16. It is lways fafer to explain darker passages by such as are tore clear. d

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9. Let them guard against an humour of newfangledels, nauseating old and solid truths, and seeking after mething new, having ears itching after new doctrines: ta, or new modes and dreffes of old truths: for this is rovoking to God, and proveth dangerous; for fuch turn way their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. Paul telleth us, 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. For the time will come; wh he, when they will not endure found doctrine, but aftheir own lufts fhall they beat to themselves teachers wing itching ears: and they Shall turn away their ears: om the truth, and fall be turned unto fables. This fapureth of a spirit of levity and inconstancy, which is ingerous.

10. They would labour to have no prejudice at the uth, but receive it in love, and the love of it; left for a cause God give them up to strong delusions, to bere hes; and to be led away with the deceivableness unrighteousnels; as we see, 2 Theff. 2, 10, 11; 12.

How to make use of Christ. And with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness in them that perifb, because they received not the love of truth, that they might be faved. And for this canfe God hall fend them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but bad plea-

fure in unrighteoufness. making it a prisoner, and detaining it in unrighteousness, like those spoken of, Rom. 1. 18. For which cause God gave them up to uncleanness and to vite affections, and they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolis beart was darkned; yea, professing themselves to be wife, they became fools, ver. 21, 22, 24, 26. They should let truth have free liberty and power in the foul, and should yield up themselves to be ruled and guided by it, and not thorture with it, lay chains upon it, or fetter it,

and keep it as a prisoner that can do nothing.

12. For this cause, they would hold fast the truth, which they have learned, and have been taught by the Spirit out of the word. When Paul would guard and forth fy Timothy against seducers, that crept into houses, lead ing captive filly women, &c. among other directions he giveth him this, 2 Tim. 3. 14, 19. But continue the in the things which thou haft learned, and haft been affund of, knowing of whom thou bast learned: And that from ebild thou baft known the boly scriptures, which are able ! make thee wife to falvation, &c. So he would have th Coloffians walking in Chrift, rooted and built up in him and fablished in the faith, as they had been taught, Co 2. 6, 7.

13. Especially they would be holding the ground work fast, faith in Christ. It were good, in such a tim of erring from the way of truth, to be gripping Chri fafter, and cleaving to him by faith, and living by fail in him. This is to hold the foundation fast; and the let the tempest of error blow as it will, they will me at a fure anchor, and be fafe, because fixed upon Rock of ages. And further, living near Christ, in fu a dangerous day, would be a noble preservative in the infections of error: the foul that is dwelling in Chri and gripping to him daily by faith, and acting love

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than another, because living under the rays of the Sun

of righteousness, which discovereth error.

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14. They would labour to learn the truth as it is in Telus; and the truths which they have heard of him. and have been taught by him, as the truth is in him, will abide, when other truths, that have been learned but of men, and heard of men, and as it was in the preaching of men, and in books, shall foon evanish in a day of trial. This is to learn Christ, as the apostle speaketh, Epb. 4. 20, 21. But ye bave not fo learned Chrift, if so be that ye have learned bim, and bave been taught by him, as the truth is in Jejus. When we learn the truth as it is in Jefus, it bringeth us always in to him, and hath a tendency to fix our hearts on him, and is a piece' of the bond that bindeth us to him and his way : we receive it then as a piece of his doctrine, which we must own, and fland unto. O it we learned all our divinity thus! we would be more constant and stedfast in it than we are.

15. When controverses arise, and they know not which fide to choose, both seemeth to them to be alike well founded on the word; they would exerce their fpiritual fagacity, and fer their gift of discerning a-work, to fee which of the two tendeth most to promove piety and godliness, and the kingdom of Christ; and so see which of the two is the truth which is after godlines, as the apostle speaketh, Tit. 1. 1. They must look which of the two is the doctrine which is according to godlinels, 1 75m. 6. 3. that is, the truth which is Christ's. and which should be owned and embraced, viz. which floweth from a spirit of godliness, and tendeth to promove godliness, and fuiteth with the true principles of godliness, even gospel-godliness, wrought according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, that is, by the frength of the Spirit of Jesus, dwelling and working in us; and not according to the tenor of the covenant of works, that is wrought by our own strength, &c.

hake not here: for they may look upon fome ways and toctrines as having a greater tendency to promove god-

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lines than others, which indeed have not, but only seem so. They would therefore consider well what is the way of godlines laid down in the noble device of the gospel, which is the way that only glorifieth God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and see what suiteth most with that, according to the word; and not what seemeth most suitable to godlines in their apprehension. The word is the best judge and test of true godlines; and in the word we have the only safest mean of true godlines held forth; therefore we should see what doctrine tendeth most to promove godlines according to the way held forth in the word; and choose that.

17. They would guard against pride and self-conceit, as thinking they are wife enough, and understanding enough in those matters, and so need not take a Jesson of any. This may be of great prejudice; for it is the meek that God guideth in judgment, and to the meek will be teach bis way, Pfal. 25. 9. Therefore it were good for his people in fuch a day to be meek and humble, willing and ready to learn of any person, how mean soever, that can teach the ways of God. The Lord may bless a word spoken by a private person, when he will not bless the word spoken by a minister: for his bleffings are free, and it is not good to despise any mean. Apollos, tho infiructed in the way of the Lord, mighty in the scriprures, fervent in spirit, and teaching diligently the things of the Lord, A& 18. 24, 25. yet was content to Icarn of Aquila, and of his wife Priscilla, when they expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly, v. 26.

18. In such a time, it is not unsafe to look to such as have been eminent in the ways of God, and ly near to him; for it is probable, they may know much of the mind of God in those questioned matters: hence we find the apostle putting Timothy and others to this duty, in a time when false teachers were going abroad, saying, 2 Tim. 3. 10. But thou hast fully known my dostrine, manner of life. And, 1 Cor. 4. 16. Wherefore I befeech you, he ye for lowers of me. And, 1 Cor. 11. 1. And again, Phil. 3. 17. Brethren, he followers together of me. All with that the we should call no man Rabbi, as hanging our faith absolutely on him; yet in such a time of prevailing errors.

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for, and of false teachers going abroad, some respect should be had to such as have found grace of the Lord to be faithful in times of trial, and have maintained truth, and stood for it, in times of persecution, and have with singleness of heart followed the Lord; it not being ordinary with God to leave such as in sincerity seek him, and desire to follow his way in truth and uprightness, and to give the revelation of his mind and the manifestation of his spirit to others, who have not gone thorow such trials.

19. They would also at such a time be much in the fincere practice of uncontroverted duties, and in putting uncontroverted and unquestionable and unquestioned truths into practice; and this may prove a notable mean to keep them right: for then are they in God's way; and so the devil hath not that advantage of them, that he hath of others, who are out of the way of duty. David understood more than the ancients, because he kept God's precepts, Pfal. 119, 100.

20. It were good and suitable at such a time to be much in the fear of God, remembring what an One he is, and how hazardous it is to sin against him, by drinking in the least point of error. The promise is made to such; Psal. 25. 12. What man is be that feareth the Lord? him

Shall be teach in the way that be fall chufe.

21. Finally, At fuch a time they would be much in communion with Jesus, lying near him; much in prayer to him, studying his relations, offices, furniture, readiness to help with light and counsel; and they would draw near to him with humility, boldness, faith, considence, love, tenderness and sincerity: and then they shall not find that he shall fail them, or disappoint them.

Enough of this. I proceed therefore to another case,

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#### CHAP. XVII.

How to make use of Christ as the Truth, that we may get our case and condition cleared up to us.

He believer is oft complaining of darkness concerning his case and condition, so as he cannot tell Q 4 what what to say of himself, or what judgment to pass on himself, and he knoweth not how to win to a distinct and clear discovery of his state and condition. Now, it is Truth alone, and the Truth, that can satisfy them as to this. The question then is, How they shall make use of and apply themselves to this Truth, to the end they may get the truth of their condition discovered to them? But first let us see what this case may be. Consider then,

nor observed; this is manifest by daily experience.

2. Not only so, but a gracious soul, that is reconciled with God in Christ, and hath the Spirit of grace dwelling in it, may suppose itself a stranger, yet unto this reconciliation, and void of the grace of God, and

fo to be still in the state of nature,

3. Yea, a foul may not only suppose and conclude itfelf in nature, while it is in a state of grace; but further, may be filled with terror and apprehensions of God's wrath and indignation, and that in such a measure as that thereby it may be as a distracted person, as we see it was with Heman, Pfal. 88. 15. who faid, While I fuffer thy terrors, I am distracted. The wrath of God lay hard upon him, and he faid, that he was afflicted with all God's waves, ver. 7. hence he cried out, ver. 16, 17. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrors have cut me off. They came round about me daily (or all the day) like water, they compassed me about together. And yet, for all this, the first word of his complaint was faith, ver. 1. Many fuch complaints hear we out of Job's mouth, to whom God notwithstanding was that gracious, that he never came to question his state before God, or to conclude his hypocrify, or his being still in the state of nature, But it is not so with every one that is so exercised.

4. Yea further, with those inward strokes upon the soul, they may have sin and guilt charged home upon their consciences; and this will make their life yet more bitter, and put a sharper edge upon the rods. Thus was Job made to possess the sins of his youth, Job 13. 26. and made to say, My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and

thou fowest up mine iniquity, Job 14. 17.

5. Moreover, they may be in such a condition a long

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for clearing up our state and condition. 249 time, and all the while have no light of comfort, as we may see in Job and Haman. They may even walk in darkness, and have no light of comfort, 1/a, 50. 10.

6. Yea, and also be without the hope of a delivery or outgate. Hence crieth Heman, Psal. 88.4, 3. I am counted with them that go down into the pit, free among the dead, like the slain that ly in the grave, whom thou remembrest no more, and they are cut off from thine hand. Yea, they may be driven to the very border of despair, and conclude that there is no hope; as the Church did, Ezek, 37.11. Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts: and as Job, Chap. 7. 6. My days are swifter then a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope; and, Chap. 19. 10. He bath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: mine hope bath he removed like a tree.

Now, the sometimes, as we see in Job, and in Heman too, a soul may be under such a sad and sharp dispensarion, and yet not brought to question their state, or to conclude themselves children of wrath, lying still in black nature; yet it is not so with all who are so exercised; but many, under such a dispensation, may at least be in the dark as to their state before God; and if they do not possively affert their state to be bad, yet they do much question if they be in the state of grace, and would be comforted under all their pressures and afficitions if they could win to the least well-grounded apprehension of

their interest in Christ.

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In such a case as this is, there is ground for a poor soul to make use of Christ for outgate; and an outgate may be had in God's time, and as he seeth fit, by a right use-making of, and going out to, him who is the Truth. So then the soul, that would have its state and condition cleared up, and a discovery of its being reconciled to God thro' Jesus, and in a state of grace, and would make use of Christ as the Truth, for this end, would,

1. Look our to Christ, as a feeling high Priest, saithful and merciful, who, being like us in all things except sin, doth sympathize with and succour such as are tempted, Heb. 2. 17, 18. and a Priest that is touched with the fee so of our infirmities, Heb. 4. 15. Albeit Christ, in the deepest of his darkness, was never made to question

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his Southip, but avouched God to be his God, even when he was forfaken, Pfal. 22. I. Mat. 27. 46. Mark 15. 34 yet he knew what it was to be tempted to question his Southip, when the devil said unto hip, Mat. 4. If then be the Son of God: And he knows what such a distress as he himself was into, wrestling with an angry God, hiding himself and forsaking, will work in a poor finner; and, being a merciful and sympathizing high Priest, he cannot but pity such as are under such a distemper, and as a gracious Head sympathize with them. Now, the believer would look out to him, as such an one, and upon this ground go to him with considence and boldwess, and lay out their case before him, that he may help and send relief.

2. They would also eye Christ, as able to fave out of that condition, and to command light to shine out of darkness; and so, as One able to save to the uttermost all

that come to God through him, Heb. 7. 25.

3. And not only so, but eye him also, as given, sent and commissioned of the Father, to be a light to such as sit in darkness; even to the Gentiles, Isa. 42. 6. & 49. 6. Luke 2. 32. Ads 13. 47. & 26. 23. John 8. 12. and this will encourage the poor souls to go out to him with their darkness, when they see that he is sent as a Light, and as the Truth, to clear up poor souls that walk in darkness and have no light. When they see that it is his place and office to help them, and consider that he is true to his trust, and true and faithful in all that was committed to him, it not only will embolden them to come forward to him, but it will strengthen their hope, and encourage them to wait on.

4. They would flay themselves on him, as an all-sufficient helper, renouncing all other; crying out, that they will have no light but his light, and that they will seek nowhere else for light, but wait at his door, till he, who is the Sun of righteousness, arise in their soul,

and come with healing light in his wings.

5. They would by faith roll and cast their darkned souls, their consused case, their overwhelmed bearts, on him, and leave them there; for he is the only physician: and the blind soul must be put in his hand, who can take

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6. It would be useful and very fleadable, in such a time of darkness, for the believer to be frequent in acting direct acts of faith on Christ; that is, be frequent in going to him, as an all-fufficient Mediator, as the only refuge and shadow for a poor weary scorched soul, Ifa. 4. 6. & 32. 2. And a man hall be as an biding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as vivers of water in a dry place, as the badow of a great rock in a weary land: as one who is a frength to the needy in his difress, a refuge from the florm, a badow from the beat, &c. Ifa. 25. 4. When the foul is thus overwhelmed with clouds, and doubteth of its interest in Christ, in would then put it out of doubt, by fleeing to him for refuge from the florm of God's indignation, and lay hold on him as he is offered in the gospel, and thus renew its grips of him as the offered all-fufficient Mediator: and frequent direct acts of faith will help at length to a reflex act. The foul that is daily running to Christ. according to the covenant, with all its necessities, and laying hold on him as only able to help, will at length come to fee that it bath believed on him, and is made welcome by him, and accepted thro' him. So that reiterated acts of faith on an offered Caurioner and falvation, will dispel at length those clouds of darkness that trouble the foul.

7. Such fouls would beware of making their bands fironger, and their darkness greater, by their folly and unwise carriage. For this cause, they would beware,

(1.) To cry out in despondency of spirit, as if there were no hope, and to conclude peremptorily that they are cut off, and it is in vain to wait any longer: for this course will but darken them more, and multiply the clouds over their head.

(2.) To run away from Christ thro unbelief and despair; for that will make their case yet worse.

(3.) To walk untenderly, and not circumspectly; for, the re fins appear, the less light will be had. O but so would be tender in all their conversation at that time, and guard against the least fin, or appearance of evil!

(4.) To

(4.) To fret and repine against God because of that dispensation: for that will but intangle the soul more, and wreath the yoke straiter above its neck, and put itself further out of case to be relieved, and to receive light.

8. Lafty, Such would do well not to limit the holy One of Israel, but to wait with patience till his time come to speak in light to the soul; knowing that such as wait upon him shall never be assamed, Isa. 49. 23. because be waiteth to be gracious; and therefore blessed are they all that wait upon him, Isa. 30. 18.

Dueft. But what if, for all this, I get no outgate, but my diffress and darkness rather grow upon my hand?

Anf. That such a thing may be, I grant; the Lord thinking it sit, (1.) To exercise their saith, dependence, patience, hope and desire more. (2.) And to discover more unto them their own weakness, faintings, fairhlesness. (3.) To shew his absolute power and sovereignty. (4.) To make his grace and mercy more conspicuous and remarkable at length. And, (5.) To train them up in a way of dependence on him in the dark, and of leaning to him when walking in darkness, yea, and in a way of believing when they think they have no faith at all, and for other holy ends. Yet the soul would not despond: for there are several things that may serve to support and bear up the heart even in that case; as,

1. This is not their case alone: others have been in the like before; and many have had the like complaints in all ages, as is known to such as have been acquainted

with exercised souls.

2. It may yield peace and comfort, to know that they are about duty, when looking to him, and depending upon him, and waiting for his light.

3. The promises, made to such as wait for him may

support the foul, and yield comfort.

4. The diffinct knowledge and uptaking of their condition, tho' it be comfortable and refreshing, yet it is not absolutely necessary. A soul may be a saved soul, tho' those clouds should continue to its dying da, and tho' as long as they lived they should never get a clear discovery of their gracious state, but spend their days in mour.

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for clearing up our state and condition. 153 mourning, complaining, and crying out of darkness, &c.

5. Such a foul fhould think that 'tis much that he is kept out of hell so long; and sure, the thoughts of what he is, and of what he deserveth, may make him sober, and not to think much, tho' he reach not so high as to see his name written in the book of life.

6. They would know, that full affurance of hope and of faith is but rare; and even such as have it, do not ordinarily keep it long: so that it should not much trouble them, it after all their pains they cannot win at it.

7. If they win to any real ground of hope, how small foever, they should think much of that; for many dear to Christ live long, and never know what so much is.

8. It is no small matter, that they are not finking in the gulf of inconsideration, and plagued with an indifferency in these matters, but are made to value Christ

and an interest in him at such a rate.

9. Their going to Christ with all their wants, laying all on him, and their making that their daily exercise. may keep up their hearts from fainting, yea, and fill their fouls with joy: for that is really the exercise of faith; and the great and precious promifes are made to fuch as believe, and nor to fuch only as know they do believe. I grant, fuch as know not that they do believe. cannot draw comfort from these promises; yet it is as true. that one may, by reflecting on the actings of his own foul. fee and know that really he is going out to Christ, torsaking himself, casting his burden on him, waiting and depending upon him; when yet he will not fay that he doth. believe: and, when he feeth this working of foul toward Christ, he is obliged to believe that he believeth, and thereupon rejoice in the hope of the great, promises, And however, the very fight and knowledge of this acting and motion of foul may give them fome comfort, the they shall not take it for faith; because it is the way of duty, and it is the thing which the gospel calleth for; and because they cannot show an instance of any one foul that did so, and perished. But the truth is, the right understanding of the nature of faith would class many doubts, and prevent many questions.

I come to speak a little to the last case which I shall handle, which is.

#### CHAP. XVIII

How we shall make use of Christ as the Truth, that we may coin to right and fuitable thoughts of God.

His is a case that much troubleth the people of God: they cannot get right and fuitable thoughts of God, which they earneftly defire to have; nor know not how to win at them. And certain it is, he only who is the Truth, and came out of the bosom of the Father, can help here. Therefore, for our ule-making

of him for this end, it would be remembred,

1. That the mind of man, thro' the fall, is nothing but a mais of ignorance and blindness; that the underflanding is darkned, Eph. 4. 17, 18. and naturally we are in darknefs, 1 John 2. 9, 11. yea, under the power of darkness, Col. 1.13. And, which is more, our minds naturally are filled with prejudice against God, and enmity; thro wickedness naturally residing there, and which the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, increaseth and stirreth up.

2. That this evil is not totally taken away, even in the godly, but helped only in part: for they fee and

know but in part, 1 Cor. 13. 13.

3. That hence it cometh to pals, that, thro' the working of corruption, the foul of a believer can fometime win to no right thought of God at all, or at best to some very narrow and unfuitable conceptions of him and his ways; yea, fometimes, all the thoughts they can get of God are vain and idle, if not mishapen and blasphemous.

4. That, as we are, we cannot fee God: for no man bath seen him, Mat. 11. 27. John 4. 46. for he is an invifible God, 1 Tim. 1. 17. Heb. 11. 27. He awelletb to light which no man can approach unto. Him no man bath feen, nor can fee; I Tim. 6. 16. 1 John 4. 12.

5. That all that knowledge of God, which is faving, is to be found in Christ, who is the brightness of his gloty, and the express image of his person, Heb. 1. 2. and the image of the invisible God, Col. 1. 15. and is for a end come out from the bosom of the Father, that he might Invifi 16. 8 John 6. we m

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might acquaint us with him, and with all his fecrets, fobn 1. 18. Mat. 11. 27. so far as is needful for us to know. He is God incarnate, that in him we may see the Invisible. Thus God is manifest in the fless, 1 Tim. 3. 16, and the Word was made fless, and dwelt among us,

John 1. 14.

6. That therefore, if we would fee and know God we must go to Christ, who is the Temple in which God dwelleth and manifesteth his glory; and in and thro him must we see and conceive of God. The light that well get of the knowledge of the glory of God, must be in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6. that is, in the manifestations that Christ hath made of himself, in his natures, offices, ordinances, works, difpensations of grace mediate and immediate, &c. And thus doth God, who mmanded the light to Shine out of darkness, cause this light of the knowledge of his glery bine into our bearts, wiz. in the face of Felus Chrift, that is, in the disponsations of grace, in the gospel, which is the glorious gospel of Chrift, 2 Cor. 4. 4. and, as it were, the face of Jefus Christ: for, as by the face a man is best known and die finguished from others, so Christ is visibly, discernibly and manifestly seen and known in and by the gospeldispensations; there are all the lineaments and draughts of the glory of God, which we would know, lively and clearly to be feen.

So then, if we would make use of Christ for this end, that we may win to a right sight of God, and suitable conceptions of his glory, we would consider those

things;

1. We would live under the fense and therew conviction of the greatness and incomprehensibleness of God, as being every way past finding out: and also under the conviction of our own darkness, and incapacity to conceive aright of him, even as to what he hath revealed of himself.

2. We would know, that what the works of creation and providence declare and preach forth of God, the to be sufficient to make heathers and others, that do not impress the same to a right acknowledging of him, internable; as Paul teacheth us, Rom, 1, 20, yet all that

is thort of giving to us that faving knowledge of him, which must be had, and which is life eternal, John 17.2.

3. We would know, that what of God is to be found out by the works of creation and providence, is more diffinctly feen in Christ, and in the gospel. Here is a greater and more glorious discovery of God, and of his glorious attributes, his justice, power, wisdom, goodness, holiness, truth, &c. than can be found by the deepest diving naturalist, and most wise moral observer of providence, that is not taught out of the gospel,

4. Yea, there is comething of God to be feen in Christ, in the gofpel, which can be observed in none of his works of creation or common providence: there is the prace of God that bringeth Salvation, that is made to atpear only by the gospel, Tit. 2. 11. and there is a peculiar kindness and love of God toward man, which is only discovered by Christ in the gospel, Tit. 3. 4. There is that manifold wisdom of God, that mystery which was hid from the beginning of the world in God; that principalities and powers in heavenly places, the greatest and wifest of naturalists, must learn by the Church, wherein that is preached and proclaimed, by the dispensation of the gospel, Epb. 3. 9, 10. His mercy pardoning poor finners, juffice being satisfied, cannot be cleared by nature. Nature cannot unfold that myftery of justice and mercy concurring to the falvation of a finner, only the gospel can clear that riddle.

5. We would remember, that all the beams of that glory, which are necessary and useful for us to know, are, to speak so, contracted in Christ, and there vailed, to the end that we may more steadily look upon them. We may go to our Brother, who is stess of our sless, and there, through the vail of his sless, see and behold what otherwise was invisible. As we can look to the sun better shining in a pail of water, than by looking up immediately; so can we behold God and his glory better in Christ, where there is a thin vail (to speak so) drawn over that otherwise blinding, yea killing, glory than by looking to God without Christ; for,

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for getting right thoughts of God. could not endure one glance of an immediate ray of di-

vine glory, it would kill us outright,

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6. We must then go to Christ, and there see God: for he who feeth him, feeth the Father also, John 14. 9. Particularly, we must go to the face of Jesus Christ, that is, that whereby he hath made himself known, the noble contrivance of the glorious gospel, wherein all things are so carried on, as that God is glorified in his Son, in the falvation of poor finners. The whole work of falvation is laid on Christ, and the Father is glorified in him, who is his Servant and his Chofen, whom he upholdeth and furnisheth for the work, Isa. 42. 1, 2. He is called the Covenant itself: He is the undertaker in the covenant of redemption, and in the covenant of grace; all is founded on him; all the good things of it are given out by him; all the grace, by which we close with it, and accept of him according to it, is given by him. Now, in this gospel-contrivance are all the lines of the glorious face of Christ to be seen; and in that face must we see and discern the glory of God, all the rays of which are centred in Chriff, and there will we get a noble prospect of that glorious Object. So that all such as would make use of Christ for this end, that they might come to have right and fuitable thoughts and apprehensions of God, must be well acquainted with the whole draught and frame of the gospel, and to acquainted therewith, as to fee Christ the substance, ground, and all of it, and to fee him in every part of it.

7. Whatever we know or learn of God by his works of creation and providence in the world or about ourfelves, we would bring it in here, that it may receive a new tincture, and a deeper impression. That is done, when we find and learn fomething of Christ there, and are brought nearer Christ thereby, and made thereby to discover something more of the glory of God in the face of Christ, or are made to understand better something of the revelation that is made of God in the gospel,

or moved thereby to improve it better.

8. In all this matter, we must not go without our gui e, lest we wander in this wilderness, and it prove a labyrinth to us. We must take Christ with us all along:

interpreter, and teach us how to read this book, and how to understand what is written therein: he must give the discerning eye, and the understanding heart; even the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, to take up the musteries of God.

9. And, for this cause, we would by faith lay hold upon the promises of the Spirit, whereby we may be made spiritual, and have our understandings inlighted more and more, to understand the mysterious characters

of divine majesty and glory.

and carry with a simpressions of the dreadful majesty and glory of God, that we may tremble and sear, and stand in awe, and read what we read of this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, this glorious Bible, with reverence and godly sear.

And thus we may be helped to win to right and fuitable thoughts of God. Yet withal we would, for

CAUTIONS,

Confider a few things further; as,

That we must not think to learch out the Almighty

unto perfection, Job 11, 7.

2. Nor must we think to get any one point of God known and understood perfectly: corruption will mix in itself; do our best; and our shortcomings will not easily be reckoned up.

3. We must beware of carnal curiofity, and of un

lawful diving in in this depth, left we drown.

4. We would not dream of a state here wherein we will not need Christ for this end. Yea, I suppose, in glory he will be of use to us as to the seeing of God: for even there, as he is to-day, so shall he for ever abide. God and Man in two distinct natures and one person and that cannot be for nought. And as God will be still God, invisible and unsearchable; so we, tho glorised, will remain finite creatures, and therefore will stand in need of Christ, that in his glorious sac may see the Invisible. He must be our lumen gloria.

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for getting right thoughts of God. 250 We fould think it no fmall matter to have the impression of this fight upon our hearts, that we cannot fee him, and that we, in this flate of fin, cannot get right and fuitable apprehenfions of him; I fay, the impression of this on our spirits, that is, such a fight of impossibility to get him seen aright, as will keep the heart in awe, and cause us walk before him in fear and reverence, and to humble ourselves in the dust, and to tremble whenever we make mention of his name, or begin to meditate on him, knowing how great an One he is, and how dangerous it is to think amis of him, and how difficult to get a right thought of him.

## is considered to the C Hat P. XIX.

# And the LIFE.

#### How Christ is the Life.

HIS, as the former, being spoken indefinitely, may be univerfally taken, as relating both to fuch as are yet in the state of nature, and to such as are in the flate of grace; and so may be considered in reference to both, and ground three points of truth, both in reference to the one, and in reference to the other; to wit, i. That our case is such, as we stand in need of his help, as being the Life. 2. That no other way but by him can we get that Supply of life which we stand in need of; for he only is the Life, excluding all other. 3. That this help is to be had in him fully and compleatly: for not only is he able to quicken, but he is called the Life. So that the help, which he giveth, is full, excellent, and compleat.

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Looking upon the words in reference to fuch as are in nature, they point out those three truths to us;

First, That all of us by nature are dead, standing in need of quickning and of life; for this is presupposed, while he is faid to be the Life; and that both legally and cally. Legally, being under the fentence of death for Adam's transgreftion, Rom. 5, 15, and for that original corruption of heart we have; and really, the fen-

R a

tence of the law being in part executed, and that both as to the body, and as to the foul. As to the body, it is now subject to death, and all the forerupners thereof, fuch as weakness, pains, fickness, fears, torment, trouble, weariness, yea, and in hazard of hell-fire, and the torments of the second death for ever. As to the soul, it also is many ways dead, both first in a way that is purely penal, and next in a way that is also finful; and both ways, as to what is present, and as to what is future: for, as to that which is penal and prefent, it is, (1.) Separated from God and his favour, Gen. 2. 8, 10, 24. (2.) Is under his curse and wrath; whence it cometh to pass, that by nature we are children of wrath, Eph. 2. 2, 5. Servants of Satan, 2 Tim. 2. 26. The consequence of which is sad and heavy; for hence it is that we cannot please God, do what we will: till we be brought out of that state, our ordinary and civil actions, even plowing the ground, is fin, Prov. 21. 4. yea, our religious actions, whether natural or inflitute !, are abomination; even our facrifices, Prov. 15. 8. & 21.27. and prayers, Prov. 28. 9. Pial. 10. 7. yea, and all our thoughts and purposes, Prov. 15. 26. and likewise all our eways, Prov. 15. 9. As to what is penal and future, it is obnoxious to that everlafting excommunication from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Theff. 1. 8, 9. and to the torments of hell for ever, Mark 9. 44, 46, 48. Luke 16. As to what is not only penal, but also finful, the foul here is under the stroke of darkness in the understanding, perversness and rebelliousness in the will, irregularity and disorder in the affections, whereby the foul is unfit for any thing that is good, and prone to every thing that is evil, Rom. 3. 10, 20. Epb. 2. 1, 2, 3. Rom. 5. 6. & 8. 7, 8. whence proceedeth all our actual transgression, James 1. 14, 15. And moreover, sometimes the soul is given up to a reprobate mind, Rom. 1. 28. to frong delufion, 2 Thefl. 2. 2. to bardness of beart, Rom. 2. 5. borrour of conscience, Ifa. 33. 14. to vile affettions, Rom. 1. 26. and the like spiritual plagues; which, tho' the Lord inflict e some only, yet all are obnexious to the same by nature, and can expect no less, if the Lord should enter with them

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of this kind, they are, being fewel for Tophes, obnoxious to that malignant, finful, blafphemous and desperate rebellion against God, in hell for evermore.

O how lamentable, upon this confideration, must the condition of such be, as are yet in the state of nature! Oh if it were but seen and selt! But, alas, there is this addition to all, that people know not this; they consider it not, they believe it not, they feel it not, they see it not: and hence it cometh to pass, that,

1. They cannot bewail and lament their condition,

nor be humbled therefore.

2. They cannot, nor will not, feek after a remedy: for the whole will not trouble themselves to seek after a

physician.

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And fure, upon this account, their case calleth for pity and compassion from all that know what a dreadful thing it is to be in such a condition, and should stir up all to pray for them, and to do all they can to help them out of that state of sin and misery, which is dreadful to

think upon.

Should not the thoughts and confideration of this put us all to try and search if we be yet translated from death to life, and delivered out of that terrible and dreadful state, and made partakers of the first resurtection. It not being my purpose to handle this point at large, I shall not here insist in giving marks whereby this may be known, and which are obvious in Paul's episses, and to be found handled at large in several practical pieces, chiefly in Mr. Gutbrie's Great interest. I shall only desire every one to consider and examine,

I. Whether or not the voice of Christ, which quick-

foul? This is effectual calling.

2. Whether or not there be a thorow change wrought in their foul, a change in the whole man, so as all things are become new? 2 Cor. 5. 17.

3. Whether or not there be a principle of life with-

in, and they be led by the Spirit?

whether or not there be a living to the glory of

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And when, by impartial trial, a discovery is made of the badness of our condition; should we not be alarmed to look about us, and to labour by all means for an outgate? confidering, (1.) How doleful and lamentable this condition is; (2.) How sad and dreadful the consequents of it are; (3.) How happy a thing it is to be delivered from this miserable and finful condition; and, (4.) How there is a possibility of outgate.

Finally, It may break a heart of stone to think how people, that are in such a condition, are so unwilling

to come out of it : for,

I. How unwilling are they once to suspect their condition, or to suppose that it may be bad, and that they may be yet unconverted?

2. How unwilling are they to fit down feriously to try and examine the matter, and to lay their case to the

touch-stone of the word?

3. Yes, how unwilling are they to hear any thing that may tend to awaken them, or to discover unto them the badness of their condition?

4. How ready to stifle challenges of conscience, or any common motion of the Spirit, which tendeth to

alarm their foul?

5. How great enemies are they to fuch ordinances as ferve to awaken fleeping consciences?

6. And, how do they hate such ministers as preach such doctrine as may serve to rouze them up, and set

them a-work about their own falvation?

Secondly, We learn hence, That without Christ there is no imaginable way of delivery out of this natural state of death. No other name is given under beaven subereby we can be saved, Acts 4. 12. And angels can make no help here, nor can one of us deliver another; the redemption of the soul is more precious than so, Pfal. 49. 7, 8. Nor is there any thing we can do for ourselves, that will avail here; all our prayers, tears, whippings, fastings, vows, alms-deeds, purposes, promises, resolutions, abstinence from some evils, outward amendments, good morality and civility, outward religiousness, yea, and if it were possible, our keeping of the whole we will not help us out of this pit. And we may weary our-

ourselves in such exercises in vain; for they will prove but bodily exercises that profit little. And when in this way we have spent all our time, parts, spinits and labour, we shall at length see, and say, that we have

fpent our money for that which is not bread.

This should put all of us to try what it is which we lean to for life; and what it is, the consideration whereof giveth us peace and quietness, when the thoughts of
death, judgment, hell and the wrath of God come upon
us, and trouble us: for if it be any thing beside Christ
that our foul leaneth to, and that we are comforted by,
and found all our hopes upon, we will meet with a lamentable (oh! for ever lamentable!) disappointment.
Be sure then, that our hearts renounce all other ways
and means of outgate, out of this death, beside Jesus
the Resurrection and the Life; else it will not be well
with us.

Thirdly, We see here, That delivery out of this natural state of death is only had by Christ; for he alone is the Life, and the life that is in him is suitable and excellent. Hence he is called the Bread of life, John 6, 35, 48. The Resurrection and the Life, John 11.25. The Water of life, Rev. 21. 6 & 22.17. The Tree of life, Rev. 22. 2, 14. The Prince of life, Acts 3. 15. Our Life, Col. 3. 4. The Word of life, and Life ittelf,

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And as he is a suitable and excellent Life, so is he, an all-sufficient and perfect Life, able every way to help us, and to deliver us from all the parts of our death: for,

1. He delivereth from the fentence of the law, Rom. 5. 17, 18. undergoing the curse of the law, and be-

coming a curse for us, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

2. He taketh away the curse and sting of all temporal plagues, yea, and of death itself, causing all work together for good to such as love him, Rom. 8. 28. He hath killed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, Heb. 2. 14. and, thro him the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away, I Cor. 15. 56, 57.

He reconcileth to God, taking away that distance and enmity, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and so he is our Peace and

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Peace-

Peace-maker, purchating access for us to the Father, Epb. 2. 14, 16. & 3. 12.

4. He also delivereth from the power of fin and cor-

ruption, Rom. 7. 24.

5. And from all those spiritual strokes, such as blindness, hardness of heart, &c. for he is our Light, and hath procured a new heart for us, even an heart of flesh.

6. So delivereth he from hell-fire, having satisfied justice, and having brought life and immortality to light. And he giveth life eternal, as we see, Rev. 2. 7.

Oh! it is fad that Christ is so little made use of, and that so many will for sake the fountain of living waters, and dig to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water, and slight, despise and undervalue the gospel of Christ, which bringerh life and immortality to light.

Oh if the confideration of this could move such, as never found any change in themselves, to run to and make use of Jesus Christ for life! and would, for this

end,

(1.) Cry to him, that he would make them sensible of their deadness, and waken them out of their deep sleep.

(2.) Cry to him to fet them a-work to renounce all other help befide his, as being utterly unable to quicken

and put life in them.

(3.) Cry to him, that he would draw and determine their fouls to a closing with him by faith alone, to a hearing of his voice, to an obeying of his call, to a following of his direction, to a giving up of themselves to him, leaning to him, and waiting for all from him alone: in a word, to take him for their Life in all points, and to lean to him for life, and to expect it from him, thro faith in the promises of the gospel.

Next, This being spoken to the disciples, whom we suppose to have been believers, it will give us ground to speak of it in reference to believers, and so yield three points of truth, which we shall briefly touch, and then come to speak of use-making of Christ as the Life,

in some particular cases.

First, It is here clearly presupposed, that even believers

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vers have need of Christ to be Life unto them; and so have their fits of deadness. If it were not so, why would Christ have said to believers, that he was Life? And daily experience doth abundantly confirm it: for,

1. They are off to weak and unable to relift tempta-

were quite dead.

2. They are oft so born down with discouragement, because of the strength of opposition which they meet with on all hands, and because of the manifold disappointments which they meet with, that they have neither heart nor hand, and they faint and sit up, in the ways of the Lord, and cannot go thorow difficulties, but oftrimes ly by.

3. Thro daily fighting, and seeing no victory, they become weary and faint-hearted, so that they ly by as

dead, I/a. 40. 29.

4. They oft fall fick and decay, and have need of

restoration and quickning,

5. The want of the sense of God's favour, and of the comforts of the holy Ghost, maketh them to dwine and droop, and look out as dead.

6. While under foul-defertions, upon one account or other, they look upon themselves as free among the dead, that is, as dead men, of the society of the dead, with

Heman, Pfal. 88.

7. Yea, many times they are as dead men, led captive in chains of unbelief, and corruptions; as we see David was, when his heart panted, and his strength failed him, and the light of his eyes was gone from him, Pfal. 38. 10.

8. Many times the frequent changes, and ups and downs they meet with, take all courage and heart from them, that they become like men toffed at fea, so as they

have no more ffrength.

And many such things befal them, which make them look as dead, and to stand in need of quickning, reviving and strengthning cordials from him, who is the Life. And thus the Lord thinketh good to dispense with his own people,

(1) That they may be kept humble, and know them-

felves

delves to be indigent creatures, needing influences of

(4.) That they may have many errands to him who is the Life, and have much to do with him, and depend

upon him continually.

bout them, giving proof of his skill in quickning the dead, and in bringing such thorow unto everlasting life, who were daily, as it were, giving up the ghost, and at the point of death.

where the weary are at reft, Job 3, 17, and the troubled reft, 2 The 1.7, and where the inhabitants shall not

fay they are fick, Ifa. 33. 24.

(5.) That they may be taught more the life of faith and of dependence on him, and trained up in that way.

(6.) That he may be owned, acknowledged and submitted unto, as a sovereign God, doing what he will in

heaven and in earth.

For all this, there is no cause that any should take up any prejudice at Christianity: for, for all this, their life is sure, and the outgatoris sure and sale. Nor would they think it strange to see believers of mourning and drooping, seeing their case will oft call for new supplies of life. Their sits are not known to every one nor doth every one know what lieth sometime at their heart.

Nor would they think it such an easy matter to win

The righteous are faved through many deaths.

And as for believers, they would not think it strang to meet with such fits of deadness, nor thence conclude that all their former work was but delusion, and that they are still in the state of nature; but rather observe the wisdom, faithfulness and power of God, in bring ing their broken ship thorow so much broken water yea, and shipwreeks; and his goodness in ordering matters so, as they shall be kept humble, watchful, diligent and constant in dependence upon him, who is and mulbe their Life, first and last: and hence learn a needlest of living always near to Christ, and depending constant

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is, one believe been u fupply firenge y apon him by faith; for, he being their Life, they cannot be without him, but they must die and decay.

Secondly, We hence learn, That under all these fits of deadness, to which his people are subject, nothing

without Christ will help, Not,

r. All their pains in and about ordinary means, prayer, reading, hearing, meditation, conference, &c. They will all cry out, that help is not in them: for he is the Life.

2. Nor extraordinary duties, such as fasting and prayer, and vows; these will never revive and quicken a drooping or fainting fickly soul: for they are not Christ,

nor the Life.

3. Nor will a flour couragious spirit, and resolution of heart avail: If he, who is the Life, breathe not, all

that will mele away and evanish.

4. Nor will the flock of habitual grace, which remaineth in the foul, be sufficient to quicken and revive the fick soul, if the Life breathe not on these habits; and if new influences of life and strength flow not in upon the soul, and new rays come not down from this sun of righteousness to warm the frozen soul, the habits will ly by as dead.

5. Far less will their great gifts and endowments help them out of that dead condition; all their light and knowledge, without the influences of this Life; will prove weak and infusficient for this end and purpose.

6. Nor will found, pure and lively-like ordinances work out this effect: for, till he look clown, all thefe ordinances may prove dead and deadning to them.

It were good if believers were living under the conviction of this daily, and by their practice and carriage declaring that they believe that Christ only is the Life, and that they must live in him, and be quickned and revived thro' him alone.

Thirdly, We see hence, That Christ is the Life, that is, one that sufficiently, yea and abundantly, can help the believer, while under those fits of deadness which have been mentioned, and the like. There is in him a rich supply of all things that tend to revive, encourage, strengthen and enliven a soul under spiritual deadness and

and fainting: therefore is he called the Life; as having in him all that which is necessary for, and answerable to, souls under spiritual sicknesses, distempers, desertions, fainting and swooning sits, &c. for with him is the fountain of life, Psal, 36. 9, and he it is that upholdeth the soul in life, Psal, 66. 9, and can command the blessing, even life for evermore, Psal, 133. 3.

For further clearing of this, we would confider those

things;

glory, and thereby bath life in himself, John 5. 26. and can quicken whom he will, ver, 21. By this he proveth there his own Godhead and equality with the Father. So, John 1. 4. it is said that in him was life, and that life was the light of men; whereby also his Godhead is confirmed. This should be firmly believed, and rooted in our hearts, as being the ground of all our hope, comfort and life: for were it not so, that our Mediator were the true God, all our hopes were gone, our comforts could not be long-lived, and our life were extinct.

2. As Mediator God-Man, he is fully and throughly furnished to quicken and enliven his members and sollowers first and last; and all alongst their life must be bid with Christ in God, for in him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodity, Col. 2. 9. As Mediator, he is called a Tree of life, Prov. 3. 18. quickning and enlivening all that feed upon him; and the Bread of life, John 6. 35, 48. Yea, because of power and authority to command life to the dead soul, he is called the Prince of life, Acts 3. 15. and, as a living quickning stone, he giveth life to all that are built upon him, I Pet. 2. 4. Yea, as being fully sitted and surnished for this work, he calleth himself the Resurrestion and the Life, John 11. 25. This should be rivered in our hearts, as a comfortable and encouraging truth.

3. Of this stock of life, and quickning and reviving grace, which he hath got, and is surnished withal, as Mediator and Redeemer of his people, he is communicative; Of his fulness do we receive, and grace for orace, John 1.16. He got it, that he might give it out, and that from him as an Head it might flow out unto his mem-

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bets; and therefore he is the Bread that came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world, John 6.35. Yea, he giveth eternal life to all his sheep, John 10.28. and he is come for this end, that his sheep might have life. John 10.10. Therefore hath he taken on such relations as may give ground of confirmation of this, as of an Head, of a Stock or Root, and the like. This confideration is strengthning and reviving.

4. He communicateth of this stock of life, and of reviving strength, which he hath, most sweetly, and on

most easy terms. So that,

(1.) Such as feek him shall find life by him, Pfal. 69.32.

(2.) Yea, such as know him shall not miss life, John

17. 3. 1 John 5. 20.

(3.) If we will believe on him and rest upon him, we have life first and last, John 3. 15, 16, 36. & 6. 40, 47. 1 Tim. 1. 16.

(4.) If we will come to him, John 5. 40. and cast our

dead foul upon him, we shall live.

(5.) If we will hear his voice, Ifa. 55. 3. and receive his instructions, we shall live; for they are the instructions of life.

(6.) Nay, if the foul be so dead, that it can neither walk nor hear; if it can but look to him, he will give

life, 1/4. 45. 22.

(7.) And if the foul be so weak, that it cannot look, nor lift up its eyes; yet, if it be willing, he will come with life, Rev. 22. 17.

Oh if this were believed!

5. As he is communicative of that life which he hath gotten as Head, and that upon easy terms; so he giveth out of that life liberally, largely, abundantly, yea, more abundantly, John 10. 10. The water of life, which he giveth, is a well of water springing up to everlasting life, John 4. 14. therefore he alloweth his friends to drink abundantly, Cant. 5. 1.

6. Yet it would be remembred, that he is Lord and Master thereof, and Prince of this life, and so may dispense and give it out in what measure he seeth fit; and he is wife to measure out best for his own glory, and to

their advantage.

Some general ufes

All this life is fure in him, none of his shall be disappointed thereof. His offices which he hath taken on, and his commission which he hath of the Futher, abundantly clear this; and love to his, will not suffer him to keep up any thing that is for their advantage. He is faithful in his house as a Son, and will do all that was committed unto him to do. The whole transaction of the covenant of redemption and suretiship, and all the promises of the new covenant of grace, confirm this to be a sure truth; so that they that have him have his, I John 5, 12. Prov. 8, 25.

and quickning. His words and doctrine are the words of eternal life, John 6. 62, 68. Phil. 2. 16. his works and ways are the ways of life, Alis 2 28. his natures, offices, Infferings, actings, and all he did as Mediator, concur to the quickning and enlivening of a poor dead foul.

ed to the believer's condition in all points, as we shall hear.

This life is eminently and transcendently in him, and exclusively of all others. It is in him, and in him alone; and it is in him in a most excellent manner, so that he is the Life, in the abstract? not only a living Head, and an enlivening Head; but Life itself, the Life, the Resurrection and the Life.

# CHA PierxXI equation in do

Before we come to speak of some particular cases of deadness wherein believers are to make use of Christ as the Life, we shall first propose some useful consequences and deductions from what hath been spoken of this Life. And,

First. The faith of those things which have been mentioned would be of great use and advantage to believers: and therefore they should study to have the faith of this truth fixed on their hearts, and a deep impression thereof on their spirits, to the end that, be ke givin pontl being and Life the L

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To Be their cafe and condition what it will, they might be kept from despair and despondency of spirit, from giving over their case as hopeless, and from looking uponthemicives as irremediably gone. The faith of Christ's being Life, and the Life, would keep up the foul in hope. and cause it say, How dead soever my case be, yes Life can help me, and he, who is the Resurrection and the Life, can recover me. ic dead loci

12. Yea, be their case and condition what it will, they would have here some ground of encouragement, to go to him with their dead foul, and to look to him for helpe feeing he is the Life, as Mediator, to the end he might enliven and quicken his dead fainting fwooning members

and to recover them from their deadness.

3. They might be freed from many scruples and obrections, that fcar and discourage them. This one truth believed would clear up the way fo, as that fuch things. as would have been impediments and objections before. shall evanish and be rolled our of the way now : fuch as are the objections taken from their own worthlefness their long continuance in that dead condition, and the we little unocove the noble advantages, sail

4. They might hereby likewife be freed from that dreadful plague and evil of jealoufy, whereby the foul is oft kept aback from coming to Christ: for they fear he will not make them welcome; they doubt of his love and tenderness, and question his pity and compassion; yea, their jealoufy maketh them to doubt of his faithfulnels. So that the faith of this truth would cure this jealoufy, and deliver the foul therefrom, and open a way for the foul to come forward with boldness and

confidence:

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5. They might also be hereby helped to wait with patience, and to be still and quiet under the Lord's various dispensations; so as they would not fret nor repine against him, knowing that he would prove himself to be Life, even the Life; in his own good time; to that the foul would pariently wait at his door, till the were pleased to look out, and with his look convey life in to the dead foul.

6. They might be preferved hereby from looking

Secondly, May we not fee and observe here great matter of admiration at the goodness and rich bounty of God towards his people, who hath found out and condesended upon such a sure; safe and satisfying way, whereby he becometh all things to his people which they stand in need of; and that notwithstanding,

must breathe in life into them, as at first, so now again,

1. That we are most unworthy of any such dispensa-

tion of grace at his hands.

2. That we too oft are too defirous of other guests in our hearts beside him. O how much corruption, sin and death lodge we within our souls! and how more desirous are we oftrimes of death than of life!

3. That we little improve the noble advantages for life which we have granted unto us; yea, many a time we abuse them: and this he did foresee, and yet not-

withflanding would condescend thus unto us.

4. That we do little express our thankfulness for such

But not for our fakes hath he done this, but for his own name's fake: for noble and holy ends hath he refolved upon this course; as,

(1.) That he might be all and in all, Col. 3. 11. and they nothing. That he alone might fill all in all, Eph. 1. ult. and they be empty and nothing without him.

(2.) That he might wear the glory of all: For of bim, and through bim, and to bim are all things, Rom. 11. ult

and that no man might share therein.

(3.) That man might be his everlasting debtor, and cast down, in restimony thereof, his crown at his feet who sitteth on the throne, as those did, Rev. 4. 10. and might cry out with these same elders, v. 11. There are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and bonour, and power

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from Christ's being the Life. Sec. and with those, Chap. 5. 12. Worthy is the Lamb that was flain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and

frength, and bonour, and glory, and bleffing.

(4.) That man's mouth might be flopt for ever, and all boafting excluded: for man is a proud creature, and ready to boaft of that which is nothing and vanity. Now, God bath chosen this noble way of the covenant of grace, that man might boaft no more. Where is boafting then? It is excluded. By what law? by the law of works? to, but by the law of faith, faith the Apostle, Rom. 3. 24.

(5.) That all might be fure to the poor chosen belie-The Lord will not have the flock of life any longer to be in man's own hand: for even Adam in the state of innocency could not use it well, but made shipwreck thereof, and turned a bankrupt; much more would man now do fo, in this state of fin, in which he lieth at present: therefore hath God, out of love and tenderhels to his chosen ones, put all their stock in the hand of Christ, who is better able to manage it to God's glory and man's advantage, being fairhful in all things, and trusty servant, baving the fulness of the Godbead depeling in bim bodily. Therefore (faith the Apostle, Rom. 4. 6.) it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the nomifes might be fure to all the feed.

(6.) That believers might have firong consolation. potwithstanding of all the opposition of enemies without nd within, when they fee that now their life is bid with Christ in God, Col. 3. 3. and that their life is in their head: they will not fear so much devils and men with-

out, nor their own dead and corrupt hearts within.

Ibirdly, How inexcusable must all such be,

I. Who will not lay hold on this Life, on Jefus who

the Life, fure Life, yea, everlatting Life?

2. Who feek life any other way than by and thro im, who is the Life?

3. Who oppose this way of life, and not only reject he offers of it, but prove enemies to it, and to all that

arry it or preach it?

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Fourtbly, Here is strong encouragement to all, that fould be at heaven, to enter into this gospel-way, which a way of life. Such need not fear that their falvation

Some general uses

Shall not be throughed: let Satas and all their adversaries do what they can, all that enter into this way shall live; for the way itself is life, and nothing but life. So that here all objections are obviated: Life can answer all. If the believer fear that he shall never win thorow

all. If the believer fear that he shall never win thorow disficulties, he shall die by the way, or, by fainting, succumbing and swooning, dishonour the profession, and at length fall off and apostatize, or despair and give over all hope; here is that which may answer and obviate all: Life can quicken; and who can perish in the way, which is the way of life, an inlivening way, yea, the Way which is Life itself, yea, the Life, in a singular and eminent manner?

Who, the they have come to Christ, yet do not live in him as they ought, do not walk in him with that liveli-

ness and activity which is called for; but,

1. Lean too much to their own understanding, gists or graces; and think thereby to ride out storms, and to wade thorow all difficulties: whileas, if he who is the Life do not breathe upon us, all that will fail us in the day of trial; our understanding and parts or gists may dry up, and our graces may wither and decay, and go backward.

2. Rest too much on duties, when they should in them go to him who is the Life: for only in him is life to b had; and him should they seek to in the ordinances that they might have life from him in those outward du ties. And this appeareth in their way of going about duties, without that dependence on him, and fingle eying of him, which is called for; as also by their fretting and repining when duties do not their buliness, as if life lay all in duties; and concluding all will be right be cause they get duties somewhat tolerably performed, and on the contrary desponding when duties fall heavy of them, and they find themselves indisposed for duty: a which clearly evinceth, that they lay too too mic weight on dutics; whileas it would be otherwise wit them, if they were purely depending on Christ, an looking for all from him.

3. Despond too soon, because they get not help an

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relief inflantly, or because they are not preserved from

every degree of fainting.

4. Neglect to make use of him, and to come to him with all their wants, failings and necessities, as they ought; or come not with that freedom and boldness which the gospel-grounds allow.

Sixtbly, This preacheth out the world mifery of fuch as are strangers to Christ: for, being strangers to the Life, they have no life, they are dead, and death is ingraven

on all they do; even the,

1. They should be very diligent in external duties, yea, and outstrip many true believers; as the Pharifees

had their fasts twice a-week, Luke 18.

2. They should be eminently gifted, able to instruct others, and to speak of the mysteries of the gospel to good purpose and to edification: for such gifts of knowledge and utterance may be where the lively operations of the grace of Christ are not, and consequently where Christ is not as the Life.

3. They should seem eminent in all their outward carriage, and seem to carry most christianly in all their walk, and appear most devout in the matter of worship.

4. And they should have something more than ordinary; even taste of the heavenly gift, and be made partakers of extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost, yea, and taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, Heb. 6. 4, 5.

Seventbly, This discovereth the noble advantage of such as have accepted of Christ for their Life. Their condition is happy, sure, desirable and thriving: for Christ is theirs, and Life is theirs; because Christ, who

is the Life, is theirs.

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Objett. 1. But some wicked person may say, We see not that happy and advantageous condition of such as go for believers; for we observe them to be as little lively ofttimes as others, and as unsit for duties, yea, and sometimes as much subject to sin and corruption as others.

And, I. However it be with them, either in thine eyes, or possibly in their own, sometimes; yet thou mayst hold thy peace: for, in their worst condition, they would not exchange with thee for a world; in their deadest

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like

like condition, they are not void of all life, as thou art, notwithstanding all thy motions, and seeming activeness in duty; because all thy motion in and about duty is but like the moving of childrens puppies, caused by external motives, such as a name, applause, peace from a natural conscience, or the like, and not from any inward principle of grace and life.

2. Howbeit they sometimes seem to be dead, yet they are not always so; life doth really work sometimes in them: whereas there was never any true or kindly mo-

tion of life in thee,

3. There may be more life in them, yea, life in motion, when they feem to be overcome with some lusts or corruption, yea, when really they are overcome, than beholders, that are strangers to the heart; can observe: for when temptation is violent, as having the advantage of the time and place, of the constitution of the body, and the like, it argueth no small degree of life, and of life in motion, to make some resistance and opposition thereunto, tho at length he should be overcome thereby. And this opposition and resistance, slowing from a principle of grace, speaketh out life, the corruption, having the advantage, should at that time overpower the motion of life, and carry the man away.

4. If it be not otherwise with believers than is objected, they may blame themselves for not improving Christ

better for life.

Object. 2. But some, who are true believers, will object the same, and cry out of themselves as dead, and say, They find not that liveliness and activity in their souls, that will evidence Christ, the Life, dwelling and working in them.

Ans. It may be they prejudge themselves of that lively frame they might enjoy, and so wrong themselves,

1. In not exercising faith on Christ, and drawing life from him thro' faith. The life which they live should be by faith, Gal. 2. 20. How then can such as do no eat become fat? by faith we feed on Christ.

2. In not watching, but giving way to fecurity, and thereby encouraging and ftrengthning the adversary,

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wefee in David: when they frand not on their watchower, they invite Satan to fet on; and he is vigilant enough, and knoweth how to take his advantage, and to improve his opportunity.

3. In giving way to laziness, and not stirring up themselves; as we see in the Bride, Cant. 3. 1. &c 5. 3. When they stir not up the grace of God which is in them, how can they be lively? If grace be laid by, it will contract rust: the best way to keep grace lively, is to

keep it in exercise, how little soever it be.

4. By their raffiness, walking without fear; as is to be observed in Peter, when he slipt so foully. When, that their want of circumspection, they precipitate themselves into danger, and cast themselves among their enemies hands; is it any wonder that it go not with them as they would, and that they provoke God to leave them to themselves, that they may know what they are, and learn afterward not to tempt the Lord, and to walk more circumspectly?

5. By leaning too much to their attainments, and not looking our for new influences of grace and life. Hereby they provoke God to let them know to their expences, that, for as great a length as they are come, they must live by faith, and be quickned by new influences

from the Spirit of life.

6. So they may wrong themselves thro' their ignorance of Christ, and of the way of making use of him: and if they, thro' unacquaintedness with Christ and the right way of improving the sulness that is in him, miss the fruit and advantage which otherwise they might have, they can only blame themselves.

7. They may also prejudge themselves by their selflove, self-esteem, self-seeking, self-pleasing, &c. which piece and piece will draw them off Christ, and cause them forget the way of sucking life from him, who is

the Fountain of life.

8. When they give way to small fins, they open a door for greater; and they lose thereby their tenderness, and so provoke the Lord to withdraw: and this is another way whereby they prejudge themselve of that benefit of liveliness which they might otherwise have.

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o. So also by worldly-mindedness, which alienateth their mind from God. And,

10. By their impatience, and fretting and repining against God and his wife dispensations, they also pre-

that mood, they cannot with due composedness of spirit go to Christ, and draw life from him thro faith.

Object. 3. But, are there not even some of those, who are most tender, that complain of their deadness and

judge and wrong themselves : for, while they are in

Shortcomings ?

And I. It may be that they complain without cause; and that they have more cause of rejoycing, and of bleffing the Lord, for what he hath done to them, than of

complaining.

2. Their complaining will not prove the want of life, but the contrary rather: for, when they complain most, they must be most sensible, if their complaints be real, and not merely for a fashion; and sense is a manifest evidence of life.

3. It would be remembred, that the Lord can make their failings and shortcomings contribute to the furthe-

ring of their life; as we see it did in Peter.

4. It would also be remembred, that Christ doth not distribute and give out of this life to all his members and followers in a like measure, but to some more, and to others less, according as he seeth it meet and convenient, both for his own glory and their good. He hath more service for some than for others: and some he will employ in greater and more difficult work, which will call for more life; and others he will employ in common work, which will not call for ssuch an eminent degree of life.

to give to the same person a larger measure of grace at

one time than at another.

6. And that for wife reasons, and noble ends; as,

pensations; a Sovereign, that doth with his own what he will, and will not give an account of any of his ways or communications to us.

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(2.) That we may learn submission, and quietly to stoop before him, whatever measure he be pleased to dispense towards us.

(3.) That we may learn to depend upon him more closly all alongst, in all our ways to acknowledge him.

(4.) That we may learn to exercise patience, which must have its perfect work, in waiting upon him as a great King. This is his glory, and it is the testifying of our homage to him.

(5.) He will train us up so, as to be well contented and satisfied if he bring us home at length, tho' not with such a convoy of the graces of his Spirit as we would

wish.

(6.) That we may fee and read our daily obligation to Christ our Life, and the daily need we have of his keeping our life in, by tresh gales of his Spirit, and new heavenly influences.

(7.) And that, getting new proofs of his kindness and faithfulness, we may give him new songs of praise daily, and so express our thankfulness to him, which will tend

to fet forth his glory.

Eighthly, This may point out unto believers several duties to which they are called: we shall name some

few of many; as,

1. That they should rejoice and be comforted in the thoughts of this, that they have such a compleat Mediator, one that is throughly surnished, and made all things for them; not only the Way, and the Truth, but the Life also.

2. The thoughts of this should also stir up to wondring at the wisdom, graciousness and goodness of God; and to thankfulness for providing such an all-sufficient

Way for them.

3. This should also encourage them under all temptations, faintings, backsets and fits of deadness that they fall into, that there is One, who is the Life; and that he, whom their soul hath chosen, is the Life, and so fully able to quicken and enliven them.

4. This should teach them humility, and not to be proud of any thing they have or do; for it is he, who

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is the Life, who keepeth them in life, and helpeththem to any duty; yea, it is Life that workerh all in them.

5. And likewise it should teach them to acknowledge him, to whom they are obliged for any thing they do, for any life they have, or any acts or truits of life that appear in them; and to be thankful to him therefore.

6. And mainly, they should here read their obligation and duty, to improve this advantage, and to draw life out of this fountain, and so live by this Life, act and do all in and thro this Life, and so be quickned by this Life, in all their fits of deadness: and, for this cause, would keep those things in mind,

(1.) That they should live in a constant conviction of their own weakness, deadness and inability to do any acts of life of themselves; and far less to recover themselves out of any distemper and fit of deadness which

(2.) That they should live in the faith of this, That there is life enough in him, who is the Life, to do their business. They should be perswaded of his all-sufficiency.

they fall into.

(3.) That he is not only an all-sufficient deliverer, able to deliver a soul that is as it were rotting in the grave, and to cause the dead to hear his voice and live; but also most willing and ready to answer them in all their necessities, according to wisdom, and as he seeth it is for his glory, and their souls advantage. The faith of this is necessary, and will be very encouraging.

(4.) That they should go to him, how dead-like soever their condition be, and by faith roll their dead case upon him, who is the Life.

(5.) That they should pray, upon the promises of grace and influence, even out of the belly of hell, or of the grave, with Jonab, Chap. 2. 2. for he is faithful and true, and tender-hearted, and will hear and give a good answer at length.

(6.) That, in the exercise of faith and prayer, they should wait with patience, till he be pleated to come and breathe upon the dry bones, and till the Sun of righteousness arise on their souls, with healing in his wings.

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from Christ's being the Life.

But of this more particularly in the following cases, which now we come to speak a little unto, of purpose to clear more fully how the believer is to make use of Christ as the Life, when he is under some one distemper or other that calleth for life and quickning from Christ the Life. We cannot handle distinctly all the particular cases which may be brought under this head; it will suffice, for clearing of this great duty, to speak to some few.

#### CHAP. XXI.

How to make use of Christ as the Life, when the believer is so sitten up in the ways of God, that he can do nothing.

Ometimes the believer is under such a distemper of weakness and deadness, that there is almost no commanded duty that he can go about: his heart and all is so dead, that he cannot so much as grone under that deadness. Yea, he may be under such a decay, that little or no difference will be observed betwixt him and others that are yet in nature; and be not only unable to go actively and lively about commanded duties, yea, or to wrestle from under that deadness; but also be so dead, that he shall scarce have any actual desire or longing to be out of that condition. Now, in speaking to the use-making of Christ for quickning in this dead case, we shall do those things;

1. For clearing of the case, we shall show how pro-

bably it is brought on.

2. How Christ is Life to the foul in such a case as this.

3. How the believer is to make use of Christ for life in this case; and,

4. Further clear the matter, by answering a question or two.

As to the First, Such a distemper as this may be

brought upon the foul,

r. Thro' some strong and violent temptation from without, meeting with some evil disposition of the heart within,

within, and fo furprizing and overpowering the poor foul; as we fee in David, and Peter.

2. Thro the cunning and fleight of Satan, stealing

the believer, that is not watchful enough, intenfibly off his feet, and finging him afleep by degrees.

3. Thro careleines, in not adverting at first to the

beginnings and first degrees of this deadness and upsitting, when the heart beginneth to grow formal and superficial in duties, and to be satisfied with a perfuncto-

rious performance, without life and fense.

4. Thro thorturing of conscience in light and smaller matters: for this may provoke God to let conscience fall asseep, and so the soul shall become more untender, and scruple little, at length, at greater matters; and thus deadness may come to an height. God ordering it so, for a further punishment to them for their untenderness and uncircumspectness.

5. Thro' their not stirring up themselves, and shaking off that spirit of laziness and drousiness, when it first seizeth upon them; but, with the sluggard, Yet another sumber, and another sleep, and a folding of the bands to

Sleep.

6. Continuing in some known sin, and not repenting of it, may bring on this distemper; as may be observed in David.

As to the fecond particular; Christ is Life to the foul

in this case, in that,

(1.) He keepeth possession of the soul; for the seed remaineth, the root abideth fast in the ground, there is his still at the heart; tho the man make no motion, like one in a deep sleep, or in a swoon, yet life is not away.

(2.) He in due time awakneth and rouzeth up the foul, and so recovereth it out of that condition by one mean or other, either by some alarm of judgment and terror, as he did David; or dispensation of mercy and tenderness, as he did Peter. And usually he recovereth the soul.

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light, as will let the foul fee that it is not well, and that it is under that diffemper of lifelefacts.

2. By discovering the dreadfulness of such a conditi-

on, and how hazardous it is to continue therein.

3. By putting the foul in mind, that he is the Life, and the Refurrection; and, thro the flirring up of grace, airthing the foul to look to him for quickning and outgate.

4. By raising up the foul at length out of that drousiness, and sluggish folding of the hands to sleep, and out of that deep security, and putting it into a more lively.

vigilant and active frame.

As to the third, The believer, that would make use of Christ for a recovery out of this condition, would mind

those duties;

1. He would look to Christ as the Light of men, and the inlightner of the blind; to the end he may get a better and a more thorow discovery of his condition; for it is half health here, to be sensible of this disease; the soul that is once brought to sense, is half recovered of this fever and lethargy.

2. He would eye Christ as God, able to cause the dead and dry bones to live, as Ezek. 37. and this will keep from despondency and despair; yea, it will make the poor believer conceive hope, when he seeth that his Physician is God, to whom nothing is impossible.

3. He would look to him also as Head and Husband and Life to the poor foul that adhereth to him; and this will strengthen his hope and expectation; for he will see, that Christ is engaged, to speak so, in point of honour, to quicken a poor dead and lifeless member. For the life in the Head is for the good of the whole body, and of every member of the body that is not quite cut off; and the good that is in the Husband is forthcoming for the relief of the poor wife, that hath not yet gotten a bill of divorce. And Christ being Life, and the Life, he must be appointed for the relief, the quickning and recovering from death of fuch as are given to him, that they may be finally raifed up at the last day; he must present all his members lively in that day. 4. He

How to make use of Christ

4. He would by faith wrap himself up in the promisses, and ly before this Sun of righteousness, till the heat of his beams thaw his frozen heart, and bring warmth into his cold and dead soul, and thus renew his grips of him; accepting of him as the Life, and as his Life. Christ himself tells us, John 6. 40. That this is the Father's will that bath sent him, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, might have everlasting life, and he will raise him up at the last day. Faith closing with him, as it was the mean of life at first, so will it be the mean of recovery out of a dead distemper afterward.

5. He would mourn for such fins and provocations as he discovereth in himself to have caused and brought on this distemper. Repentance and godly sorrow for such evils as have sinned Christ and life away, is a way

to bring life back again.

6. He would be fure to harbour no known fin in his foul, but to fet himself against every known evil, as an enemy to the life and recovery which he is seeking.

7. He must wait on Christ his Life, in the appointed means: for that is the will of the Lord, that he should be waited upon there, and tought for there. There are little hopes of recovery for such as lay aside the ordinances. Tho the ordinances without him cannot revive or quicken a poor soul; yet if he hath condescended so far as to come with life to his people in and thro the ordinances, and hath appointed us to wait for him there, we must be willing to accept of all his condescensions of love, and seek him, and wait for him there, where he hath said he will be found.

8. In going about those ordinances of life, he would beware of putting them in Christ's room: that is, he would beware of thinking that ordinances will do his business, as some ignorantly do, who think that by praying so often a day, and reading so much, and hearing so much, they shall recover their lost lively frame, when (alas!) all the ordinances without him signify nothing. They, without him, are cold and lifeless, and can never bring heat or warmth to a cold soul. It is he in

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the ordinances whom they are to feek, and from whom

alone life is to be expected, and none elfe.

9. The life dieth not in the ordinances as separated from Christ, and life is to be expected from him alone; yet he would beware of going about the ordinances in a careless, superficial and indifferent manner; for this will argue little desire after life, and will bring on more deadness. The ordinances then should be gone about seriously, diligently, and with great carefulness, yea, with such earnestness as if life were to be had in them; and yet with such a single and pure dependence on Christ for life, as if we were not about the ordinances at all. This is the right way of going about the ordinances.

10. He must in all this wait with patience, without fretting or quarrelling with him for his delaying to come. He must wait with much humility. It becometh not him, who hath thro' his folly sinned life away, to quarrel now with God, because he restoreth him not again to life at the first asking. He may be glad if at length, after long seeking, waiting and much diligence, he come and restore to him the joy of his salvation, and if he be not made to ly as a bedrid all his days, for a monument of folly, in sinning away his life, strength and legs, as he did.

11. He must beware of giving way to any thing that may increase or continue this deadness, such as untenderness in his walk, unwatchfulness, negligence and carelesness; and especially he must beware to provoke

God, by finning against light.

12. He would also beware of limiting the Lord to any set measure of life and strength: for it becometh not beggars to be carvers, far less such beggars as throsolly have sinned away a good portion. It was not fit for the prodigal to seek a new patrimony, after he had dilapidated the former; it might suffice him to be made as a servant.

13. He would use well any small measure of life he getteth, for God and his glory; getteth he but one talent, he should use it, that he may gain thereby: Use (we say) limbs and have limbs, use strength and have it. This will be the way to get more.

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14. He would be taking on the vows of the Lord, and that in the Lord, to walk more watchful in time coming; charging all within and without not to flir or provoke the Lord to depart further, or to fcar him from coming to the foul.

As to the last particular;

If it be enquired, 1. What can that foul do, that is

not sensible of this deadness and weakness?

Así. Tho there be not any real sense or feeling of this condition, yet there may be a suspicion that all is not right: and, if this be, the soul must look out to Christ for the life of sense, and for a sight of the provocations that have brought on that condition. He that is the Life must recover the very beginnings of life: and, when the soul winners to any real apprehension and sense of this deadness, it must follow the course formerly prescribed, for a recovery.

2. But it will be asked, How a foul can act faith in such a case? And, if it cannot act faith, how can it

come to Christ, and make use of him?

Anf. It is true, while the foul is in that case, it cannot act a strong and a lively faith; yet it can act a weak and a sickly faith: and a weak and sickly faith can lay hold upon an inlivening Christ, and so bring in more strength and life to the soul. If the soul be so weak, as that it cannot grip; yet it can look to him that can quicken the dead, and hath helped many a poor soul before out of a dead condition: or, if it cannot do so much as look, yet it may give an half-look, and ly before him, who waiteth to be gracious; and sustain itself, it it can get no more, with a may-be he shall come.

3. But further, it will be asked, What the foul can do, when, after all this, it findeth no help or fupply, but deadness remaining, yea, and it may be, growing?

Ans. The soul in that case must by at his door, watting for his salvation; and resolving, if he better may be, to die at his door; and leave no approven mean or commanded duty unessayed, that it may recover its former vigour, activity and strength. And, while the believer is waiting thus, he is at his duty; and this may yield

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be ashamed, Pfal. 25. 3. 85 69. 6. Ifa. 50. 18.

### CHAP. XXII.

How Christ is to be made use for life, in case of beartlesness and fainting thro discouragements.

Here is another evil and diftemper which believers are subject to, and that is a case of fainting thro manifold discouragements, which make them so heartless, that they can do nothing; yea, and to six up, as if they were dead. The question then is, How such a soul shall make use of Christ, to the end it may be freed from that six of fainting, and win over those discouragements? For satisfaction to which, we shall,

1. Name some of those discouragements which occa-

fion this.

2. Show what Christ hath done to remove all those discouragements.

3. Show how the foul should make use of Christ for

life in this case. And;

4. Add a few words of caution.

As to the first, There are several things which may give occasion to this distemper; we shall name those few.

1. The sense of a strong, active, lively and continually stirring body of death, and that notwithstanding of means used to bear it down, and to kill it. This is very discouraging: for it made Paul cry out, Wo is me, miserable man, who shall deliver me from this body of death? Rom. 7. 24. It is a most discouraging thing, to be still sighting, and yet getting no ease, let be victory; to have to do with an enemy that abides always alike strong, fight and oppose as we will; yea, not only is not weakned, far less overcome, but that groweth in power and prevaileth. And this many times affecteth the hearts of God's children, and causeth them to faint.

'2. It may be the case of some, that they are assulted with strange temptations of Satan, his buffetings that are not usual, This made Paul cry out thrice, 2 Cor.

18 How to make ufe of Christ

was sufficient for him, what would be have done? Hence some of his cry out in their complaint, Was there ever any so tempted, so assaulted with the devil, as I am? Sure, this dispensation cannot but be much afflicting, sadning and discouraging.

3. The fense of the real weakness of grace under livey means, and notwithstanding of their serious and earnest defires and endeavours after growth in grace, cannot but disquiet and discourage them: for they may readily conclude that all their pains and labour shall be

in vain, for any thing they can observe.

4. The want of sensible incomes of joy and comfort is another fainting and discouraging dispensation; as the feeling of these is a heart-strengthning and most encouraging thing, which made David so earnestly cry for it, Pfal. 51.8, 12. When a poor soul, that hath the restimony of its own conscience, that it hath been, in some measure of singleness of heart and honestly, seeking the face of God for a good many years, and yet cannot say that ever it knew what those incomes of joy and comfort meant which some have tasted largely of, it cannot choose but be discouraged, and much cast down, as not knowing what to say of itself, or how to judge of its own case.

5. The want of access in their addresses to God, is another heart-discouraging thing. They go about the duty of prayer with that measure of earnessness and uprightness of heart that they can win at, at least this is their aim and endeavour, and yet they meet with a fast closed door: When they cry and shout, he shutteth out their prayer, as the Church complaineth, Lam. 3. 8. This sure will affect them deeply, and cause their hearts sometimes to faint.

6. The want of freedom and liberty in their addresses to God, is another thing which causeth forrow and fainting. They go to pray, but their tongue cleaveth to the roof of their mouth; they are straitned, and cannot get their hearts vented.

7. Outward perfecution that attendeth the way of godlines, and afflictions that accompany such as live godly

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godly, are another discouraging thing, both to themselves who are under afflictions, and to others who hear it and see it: wherefore the apostle desireth earnessly, that the Ephssians should not faint at his tribulation, Chap. 2. 13.

8. The Lord's sharp and fore dispensations for sin, as towards David, Pfal. 51, or out of his sovereignty, for trial and other ends, as toward Job, are likewise a discouraging heart-breaking thing, and that which will make strong giants to rore and faint, and look upon themselves as dead men; as we see in these two eminent men of God.

As to the fecond thing, Christ is Life to the believer in this case, in having done that which in reason may support under all these discouragements, and having done so much for removing or weakning of these, yea, and for carrying them over them all: which may be in a

word cleared, as to each.

1. As for the body of death, Let it stir in the believer as fast as it will or can, it is already killed, and all that struggling is but like the struggling of a man in the pangs of death; for our old man is crucified with Christ, Rom. 6. 6. and the believer is dead to sin, and risen legally with him, Col. 2. 11, 12, &c 3. 3. But of this I spoke abundance above.

2. As to Satan's troubling the poor believer, Thro' Christ also he is a vanquished enemy: He hath overcome bim that bad the power of death, even the devil, Heb.

As for that felt weakness of grace, That is no ground of discouragement, so long as he liveth, who can make the lame to leap as an heart, and can make waters break out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, Isa. 35. 6, 7. and giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might increaseth strength: so that such as wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, and they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint, Isa. 40, 29, 31. For in him are all the promises yea and amen, 2 Cor. 1. 20. So that they need not faint upon this account, nor be discouraged.

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cooraged: for the work he hash begun, he will finish
it, and he will quicken in the way, Pfat 139, 27.

Al As for the want of fenishle incomes of joy and
comfort, He hath promited to fend the Comforter in his

comfort. He hath promited to tend the Comforter in his own good time, John 14. 26. & 15. 26. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will be comfort his, Isa. 66. 13. Joy and gladness is promited in the covenant, Jer. 31. 13. But surther, Tho he keep up shote influences of joy and comfort, he supporteth another way. The lively hope of heaven may bear up the heart under all this want: for there shall the soul have sulness of joy, and pleasure for evermore; no tears, no forrow there,

Pfal. 16, 11. 1/4. 35, 10. 80 51. 11.

may peffibly blame themselves; for he hath by his merits opened the door, and is become (to speak so) Masternsher to the poor soul, to lead him in to the Father, so that by him we have access, Eph. 2, 18, yea, boldness and access, through failb in him, Eph. 3, 12, and he is our Advocate, 1 folm 2, 1, and as our Attorney is gone to heaven before us, and there liveth for ever to make intercession, Heb. 6, 20, & 7, 25. And, what is there more to be done to procure us access, or to move and encourage us to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need Heb. 4, 14, 16.

6. As to that want of freedom and liberty in prayer, He helpeth that also: for he maketh the dumb to sing Isa. 35. 6. and maketh the tongue of the stammerers to be ready to speak elegantly, Isa. 32. 4. He can inlarge the heart, and help the soul to pour out its heart before

God.

7. As to outward perfecution, He can easily take that discouragement away, by giving the hundred-fold with it, by supporting under it, and bringing safe thorow it. When his presence is with them through fire and water Isa. 43. 2. what can trouble them? and, when he makes their confolations abound, 2 Cor. 1. 5. what can discourage them? Have not his sung in the very fires, and rejoiced in all their afflictions? The resting of the Spirit

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of God and of glory, which Peter speaketh of, 1 Pet.

4. 14. is comfortable enough.

8. As for all those sharp dispensations mentioned in the last place; He having taken the sting of all, even of death, away, by taking away sin, and purchased the blessing and love of the Father, having made reconciliation thro his blood, all those dispensations slow from love, even such as seem sharpest, being insticted for sin; as we see, Heb. 12. 6. so that there is no cause here of sainting, or of being so discouraged, as to give over the matter. But, for help in this case, there should be an use-making of Jesus, as the Life: And that is

The third thing which we shall speak a little to, viz. How the foul should make use of Christ, as the Life, to the end it may be delivered from this fainting, occa-

fioned thro' manifold discouragements?

1. The believer in this case would mind the covenant of redemption, wherein Christ hath promised, and so fandeth obliged and engaged, to carry on his own thro all discouragements, to the end: so that, if any one believer miscarry, Christ loseth more than they can lose; for the believer can but lose his foul, but Christ shall also lose his glory, and this is more worth than all the fouls that ever were created. And further, not only shall Christ lose his glory as Redeemer, but the Father shall lose his glory, in not making good his promise to Christ his Son; for, by the same covenant, he standeth engaged to carry thorow all the feed, that Christ hath died for. And his appointing Christ to be his servant for this end, and choosing him from among all the folk, and his upholding of him, concurring with him, delighting in him, and promiting that he shall bring forth adgment to the Gentiles, and that to victory, or to truth, speak out his engagement to see all true believers brought home. See Ifa. 42. 1, 2, 3, 4. Mat. 12. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. Pfal. 89. 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 35, 36, 37. Sure, the faith of this would support the poor believer under all those discouragements.

2. They would mind likewise the covenant of grace, wherein all things are contrived and laid down, so as that the believer may have abundant consolation and

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comfort in all cases; and wherein there is enough to take away all cause of fainting and discouragement: as

might fully be made to appear, if any did question it. 3. They would remember how richly Christ is furnished with all qualifications suiting even that case wherein they are like to be overwhelmed with discouragements. And, could the believer but think upon and believe those three things, he might be kept up under all discouragements; (1) That Christ is a compassionate tender hearted Mediator, having bowels more tender than the bowels of any mother; to that be will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, Isa. 42. 3. He had compassion on the very bodies of the multitude that followed him, and would not let them go away fafling, left they should faint in the way, Mat. 15, 32 Mark 8. 3. and, will he not have compassion on the souls of his followers, when like to faint thro' spiritual difcouragements? (2.) That he hath power and authority to command all things that can ferve to carry on a poor believer; for all power in heaven and earth is given to him, all things are made subject to him. (3.) That he hath a great readiness and willingness, upon many accounts, to help his followers in their necessities Sure, were these three firmly believed, the believe could not faint, having Christ, who is tender and loving and willing to help, and withal able to do what he will to look to, and to run to, for supply.

4. They would take up Christ under all his heart strengthning and soul-comforting relations, as a tende Brother, a careful Shepherd, a sellow-seeling high Priest a loving Husband, a sympathizing Head, a life-communicating Root, an all sufficient King, &c. any one of which is enough to bear up the head, and comfort the heart of a drooping, discouraged and fainting soul much more may all of them yield strong consolation to support and revive a soul staggering and fainting three discouragement. Oh if we would but rightly improve and dwell upon the thoughts of the comforting and hear quickning relations! our hearts would not fail us so much

as they do.

5. They would eye him as now in glory, who,

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Head and Captain of salvation, hath wrestled through, and overcome all distinculties and discouragements that were in his way, and in name and behalf of all believers, that are his followers, and members of his body, is now possessed of glory; and thence draw an heart-comforting, and soul-strengthning conclusion, thus: Is he entred into glory as Head? then such a poor faint-hearted, heart-broken, discouraged worm, as I am, may at length come there, as a little bit of his body; especially since he said, that, seeing he liveth, all his shall live also, John 14. 19.

6. They would remember how Christ, who was always heard of his Father, John 11. 41, 42. did supplicate for this, as Mediator and Intercessor for his people, John 17. 24. saying, Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, &c. May not the poor faint-hearted believer, that is looking to Jesus, draw an heart-reviving and soul-encouraging conclusion out of this, and say, Tho my prayers be shut out, and, when I cry for relief under my discouragements, I get no hearing; but, on the contrary, my discouragements grow, and my heart sainteth the more; yet Christ always was heard, and the Father will not say him nay: Why then may I not lift up my head in hope, and sing in the hope of the glory of God, in the

midst of all my discouragements?

7. By faith they would cast all their discouragements, intanglements and difficulties, as burdens too heavy for their back, on Christ, and leave them there with him, who only can remove them; and withal resolve never to give over, but to go forward in his strength, and thus become daily stronger and stronger in resolutions, purposes, desires and endeavours, when they can do no more.

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8. They would look to Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, and set him before them, as a copy of courage, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the same, and endured contradiction of sinners against himself, Heb. 12. 2, 3. and this may prove a mera to keep us from wearying and fainting in our minds, as the apostle hinterth there.

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9. They

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g. They would remember, that Christ, going before as the Captain of salvation, hath broken the ice to them, and the force and strength of all those discouragements, as we did lately show; so that now they should be looked upon as broken and powerless discouragements.

ragements.

To. They would fix their eye by faith on Jefus, as only able to do their bufiness, to bear up their head, to carry them thorow discouragements, to apply cordials to their fainting hearts; and remain fixed in that posture and resolution, looking for strengthning and encouraging life from him, and from him alone: and thus declare, that, 1. They are unable in themselves to stand out such storms of discouragements, and to wrestle thorow such disficulties. 2. They believe he is only able to bear them up, and car. ry them thorow, and make them to despise all those discouragements which the devil and their own evil hearts muster up against them. 3. That, come what will come, they will not quit the bargain, they will never recal or take back their subscription and consent to the covenant of grace, and to Christ as theirs, offered therein, tho they should die, and die again by the way. 4. That they would fain be kept on in the way, and helped forward without failing and fainting by the way. 5. That they cannot run thorow hard walls, they cannot do impossibilities, they cannot break thorow fuch mighty discouragements. 6. That yet, through him, they can do all things. 7. That he must help, or they are gone, and shall never win thorow all these difficulties and discouragements, but shall one day or other die by the hand 8. That they will wair, earnestly feeking help from him, crying for it, and looking for it, and refold never to give over; and, if they be disappointed, they are disappointed.

Now, for the last particular, the words of caution

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fainting: for there is no perfection here, and there is much flesh and corruption remaining, and that will occasion fainting.

2. Nor would they think to be free of all the cause

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and occasions of this fainting, viz. the discouragements formerly mentioned, or the like: for, if the devil can do any thing, he will work discouragements both within and without. So that they would lay their resolution to meet with discouragements: for few or none ever went to heaven, but they had many a ftorm in their face; and they must not think to have-a way paved for

themselves alone.

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2. They would not pore too much, or dwell too long and too much, upon the thoughts of those discouragements: for that is Satur's advantage, and tendeth to weaken themselves. But it were better to be looking beyond them, as Christ did, Heb. 12. 2. when he had the crofs and the shame to wrestle with he looked to the joy that was fet before him; and that made him endure the cross, and despise the shame : and as Moses did. Heb. 11. 25, 26, 27. when he had afflictions and the wrath of the king to wrefile against, be bad respect unto the recompence of the reward, and to he endured as feeing bim qubo is invisible.

4. They would remember, that as Christ hath tender bowels, and is full of compatition, and is both ready and able to help them; so is he wife, and knoweth how to let out his mercies best. He is not like a foolish affectionate mother, that would hazard the life of the child, before she put the child to any pain. He seeth what is best for his own glory, and for their good, here and hereafter; and that he will do with much tenderness

and readiness.

5. They would look upon it as no mean mercy, if, notwithstanding of all the discouragements and storms that blow in their face, they are helped to keep their face up the hill, and are fixed in this resolution, never willingly to turn their back upon the way of God, but to continue creeping forward as they may, whatever forms they meet with: yea, upon this account, ought they heartily to bless his name, and to rejoice; for their bearts fball live that feek bim, Pial, 22, 26.

6. They would remember, for their encouragement, that as many have been helped thorow all discouragements, and have been brought home at length; fo may

they be brought thorow all those storms which now they wrestle with. It is the glory of the Mediator to bring his broken, torn and finking vessels safe to shore.

Now I come to a third case, and that is,

### CHAP XXIII. VOICE

How to make use of Christ as the Life, when the soul is dead as to duty.

Sometime the believer will be under such a distemper, as that he will be as unfit and unable for discharging of any commanded duty, as a dead man, or one in a swoon, is to work or go a journey: and it were good to know how Christ should be made use of, as the Life, to the end the diseased soul may be delivered from this. For this cause, we shall consider those sour things;

1. See what are the several steps and degrees of this

diffemper.

2. Confider whence it cometh, or what are the causes or occasions thereof.

3. Consider how Christ is Life to the foul, in such a

dead case. And,

4. Point out the way of the foul's use-making of Christ, that would be delivered herefrom.

As to the First, This distemper cometh on by several steps and degrees: it will be sufficient to mention some of the main and most remarkable steps; such as,

I. There is a falling from our watchfulness and tenderness: and, when we leave our watch-tower, we invite and encourage Satan to set upon us; as was said before.

2. There is going about duty but in a lazy way, when we love and feek after carnal ease, and feek out ways of doing the duty, so as may be least troublesom to the flesh; as the Spouse did, Cant. 3. 1. when she fought her Beloved upon her bed.

3. There is a lying by, and not flirring up ourselves to an active way of going about duty; of which the prophet complaineth, Isa. 64. 7. when he saith, There

is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.

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fuppo layin under deadness as to duty.

a. There is a giving way to spiritual drousiness, and upsitting in duties, and in the ways of God. I sleep (said the Spoule, Cant. 5. 2, 3,) and I have put off my coat, &c. She knew she was not right, but was drousy; and yet she did not shake it off, but composed herself for it, took off her coat, and washed her feet, and so lay down to sleep.

5. There is a fatisfaction and contentment with this condition, as thinking we are pretty well; at least for that time. And thus was the Spouse in that forementioned place led away; she was so far from being diffatisfied with her condition, that she rather expresses her

contentment therewith.

6. There may be such a love to such a condition, and such a satisfaction in it, as that they may shift every thing that hath a tendency to rouze them up out of that sluggish laziness, as not loving to be awakned out of their sleep. So we see the Bride shifts and putteth of Christ's call and invitation to her to arise and open to him.

7. Yea, there is a defending of that condition, as at least tolerable and none of the worst; a justifying of it, or at least a pleading for themselves, and excusing the matter, and covering over their neglect of duty with fair pretexts, as the Spouse did, when she answered Christ's call with this, that she had washed her seet, and might not defile them again.

8. Yea further, there is a pleading for this case, by alledging an impossibility to get it helped as matters now fland; or, at least, they will muster up insuperable-like difficulties in their own way of doing duty: as the sluggard will say, that there is a lion in the way; and the Spouse alledged she could not put on her coat

again.

9. Yea, it may come yet higher, even to a peremptoty refusing to fee about the duty: for, what else can be read out of the Bride's carriage, than that she would

not rife and open to her Beloved?

10. There is also a desperate laying the duty aside, as supposing it impossible to be got done; and so a resolute laying of it by as hopeless, and as a business they need

How to make use of Christ not trouble themselves withal, because they will not get it throughed. aven out at one 11. And hence floweth an utter indisposition and unfinels for dutyd admiration and allimonal 12. Yea, and in some it may come to this height, that

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the thoughts of going about any commanded duty, especially of worship either in publick or private, or their minting and attempting to fet about it, shall fill them with terror and affrightment, that they shall be constrained to forbear, yea, to lay aside all thoughts of going about any fuch duty.

This is a very dead-like condition what can be the - Chawarania arrange

causes or occasions thereof?

answer, (and this is the second particular) Some or all of those things may be confidered as having a hand in this : so i w mont severe en viarsbase e

I: No care to keep up a tender frame of heart, but growing flack, loofe and careless in going about christian duties, may bring on fuch a diftemper.

2. Slighting of challenges for omission of duties, or leaving duties over the belly of confcience, may make

way for tuch an evil.

3. Giving way to carnality and formality in duties, is a ready mean to other in this evil: for, when the fou turns carnal or formal in the discharge of duties, duties have not that spiritual lustre which they had, and the foul becometh the fooner wearted of them, as feeing no fuch defirableness in them, nor advantage by them.

4. When people drown themselves in cares of the world, they occasion this deadness to themselves: for then duties not only are not gone about heartily, bu they are looked on as a burden; and the man becomen weary of them, and from that he cometh to neglect them, and by continuing in the neglect of them he con tracteth an aversion of heart from them; and then a otter unfitness and indisposition for discharging of then followeth.

5. Satan hath an active hand here, driving on will his crafts and wiles from one step to another.

6. The hand also of a sovereign God is to be obser ved here, giving way to this, yea, and ordering ma

eets in his justice and wildom fo, as fuch perfore shall come under fuch an indisposition, and that for wife and holy ends; as, I. That by fuch a difpensarion he may humble them, who possibly were puft up before. as thinking themselves fit enough to go about any duty, how difficult or hazardous foever: as Peter, who boafted fo of his own ftrength, as he thought nothing to law down his life for Christ, and to die with him and vet at length came to that, that he could not, or durit not, speak the stuch before a damfel, 2. That he may bunish one spiritual sin with another. 3. To give warning to all to watch and pray, and to work out their falvation with fear and trembling, and not to be high-minded. but fear. 4. That thereby, in his just and righteous judgment, he may lay a stumbling-block before some. to the breaking of their neck, when they shall, for this cause, reject and mock at all religion. 5. That he may give proof at length of his admirable skill in recovering from such a distemper, that no fiesh might have ground to despair in the most dead condition they can fall into. 6. And to thew fometimes what a fovereign dispensator of life he is, and how free he is in all his favours, the modeled and draw direct the base, but bearing

As to the Third particular, How Christ is Life in this case?

We answer, 1. By keeping possession of the believer, even when he seemeth to be most dead; and keeping life at the root, when there is neither fruit appearing, nor flourishes, and hardly any green leaves to evidence life.

2. By blowing at the coal of grace in the foul in his own time and way, and putting an end to the winter, and fending the time of the finging of the birds, a

spring-time of life.

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3. By looking the bands with which he was held faft formerly, inlarging the heart with defires to go about the duty; so that now he willingly riferh up out of his bed of security, and cheerfully shaketh off his drousiness, and sluggishness, and former unwillingness; and ow with willingness and cheerfulness he setteth about the duty.

4. By

How to make ufe of Christ

4. By fending influences of life and firength into the foul, whereby the wheels of the foul are made to run with eafe, being oiled with those divine influences.

oing it by his Spirit, as he raised the Spouse out of her bed of security and laziness, by putting in his hand by the hole of the door; then were her bowels moved for him, Cant. 5. 4. and thus he setteth faith on work again, having the key of David to open the heart, Rev. 3. 7.

6. By giving a discovery of the evil of their former ways and courses, he worketh up the heart to godly forrow and remorse for what is done, making their bowels move for grief and forrow, that they should have

to dishonoured and grieved him.

7. By setting the soul thus on work to do what formerly it neither could nor would do; and thus he maketh the soul strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. 6. 10. and able to run and not be weary, and to walk and not be faint, Isa. 40.

8. By discovering the great recompence of reward that is coming, and the great help they have at hand, in the covenant and promises thereof, and in Christ their Head and Lord: He maketh the burden light, and the

duty easy.

As to the last particular, viz. How a believer in such a case should make use of Christ as the Life, that he may be delivered therefrom?

When the poor believer is any way fenfible of this decay, and earnestly desiring to be from under that power of death, and in case to go about commanded duties,

he would,

1. Look to Christ for inlightned eyes, that he may get a more thorow discovery of the hazard and wretchedness of such a condition; that hereby, being awakned and alarmed, he may more willingly use the means of recovery, and be more willing to be at some pains to be delivered.

2. He would run to the blood of Jesus, to get the guilt of his bygone finful ways washen away, and blotted our; to the end he may obtain the favour of God and get his reconciled face shining upon him again.

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3. He would eye Christ as a Prince exalted to give repentance, that so his forrow for his former finful courfes may be kindly, spiritual, thorow, and affecting the heart. He would cry to Christ, that he would put in his hand by the hole of the door, that his bowels may become moved for him.

4. He would also look to him as that good Shepherd, who will strengthen that which is sick, Ezek. 34. 16. and take notice also of his other relations, and of his obligations thereby, and by the covenant of redemption;

and this will strengthen his hope.

5. He would lay hold on Christ as his strength, whereby his feet may be made like hinds feet, and he may be made to walk upon his high places, Habak. 3. 19. and he would grip to that promise, Isa. 41. 10. I will strengthen

thee; and lay hold on Christ in it.

6. Having done thus, he would fet about every commanded duty in the strength of Jesus, looking to him for help and supply, from whom cometh all his strength: and tho' he should not find that help and affistance which he expected, yet he would not be discouraged, but continue, and, when he can do no more, offer himself as ready and willing to go about the duty, as if he had strength.

7. He would ly open to, and be ready to receive, the influences of firength which he who is the Head shall think good to give, in his own time, manner and measure.

And this taketh in those duries;

(1.) That they would carefully guard against the evils formerly mentioned, which brought on this difference; such as carelesness, untenderness, unwatchfulness, laziness, carnal security, formality, and want of seriousness, &c.

(2.) That they would beware of giving way to defpondency, or concluding the matter hopeless and remediless: for that is both discouraging to the soul, and a

tempting of God.

(3.) That they should be exercising the grace of pa-

tient waiting.

(4.) That they should be waiting in the use of the appointed means, and thereby, as it were, rubbing the

How to make ufe of Christ dead and cold member before the fire, till it gather warmth (5.) That they should be keeping all their fails up, waiting for the gale of the Spirit, that should make their thip fail. (6.) That they should be looking to him alone, who hath promised that quickning Spirit; and patiently waiting his leifure, not limiting him to any definite time. (7.) That they should be cherishing and stirring up any small beginnings that are. (8.) That they should be welcoming most cheerfully every motion of the Spirit, and improving every advantage of that kind, and firiking the iron when it is hot, and hold the wheels of the foul a-going when they are once put in motion, and so be loth to grieve the good and holy Spirit of God, Epb. 4. 30. or to quench his motions, I Theff. 5, 19. If these duties were honestly minded and gone about, in him, and in his firength; none can tell how foon there might be a change wrought in the foul. But if it be asked, What fuch can do, to whom the very thoughts of the duty, and aiming at it, is matter of terror? Ans. It may be something, if not much, of that may flow from such a bodily distemper as occasioneth the alteration of the body, upon the thorow apprehension of any thing that is weighty and of moment, so as they cannot endure to be much affected with any thing: But, leaving this to others, I would advise such a foul to those duties: To be frequently setting to the duty (as for example) of prayer, tho' that should raise the distemper of their body: for thro' time that may wear away, or at least grow less; whileas their giving way thereto will still make the duty the more and more terrible, and fo render themselves the more unfit for it; and thus they shall gratify Satan, who (it may be) may have a hand in that bodily diffemper too. When the poor foul is thus accustomed or habituated to the attempting of the dury, it will at length appear not so terrible as it did,

and fo. the body may become not fo aftered thereby as

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for recovery from under unbelief.

2. When fuch an one can do no more, he would keep his love to the duty, and his defires after it, fresh and

lively; and would not fuffer these quite to die out

3. He would be much in the use of frequent ciaculas tions, and of thort supplications darted up to God; for thefe will not make fuch an impression on the body; and to will not to occasion the raising and wakning the bodily diftemper, as more folemn addresses to God in prayer would possibly do.

4. If he cannot go to Christ with confidence, to draw out of him life and strength, according to his need; yet he may give a look to him, tho' it were from afar: and he may think of him, and speak of him frequently, and would narrowly observe every thing that pointeth him out, or bringeth any thing of him to remembrance

5. Such fouls would not give way to despairing thoughts. as if their case were wholly helpless and hopeless; for that is reflecting upon the power and skill of Christ. and therefore is provoking and dishonourable to him.

6. Let Chrift, and all that is his, be precious always and levely unto them. And thus they would keep fome room in their heart open for him, till he should be pleased to come to them with falvation. And who can tell how foon he may come?

But enough of this: there is a Fourth case of dead-

ness to be spoken to, and that is this;

# CHAP. XXIV.

How hall the foul make use of Christ as the Life, which is under the prevailing power of unbelief and infidelity?

Hat we may help to give fome clearing to a poor foul in this cafe, we shall,

I. See what are the feveral steps and degrees of this diftemper.

2. Confider what the causes hereof are.

2. Shew how Chrift is Life to a foul in fuch a cale; and.

4. Give fome directions, how a foul in that case should make use of Christ as the Life, to the end it may be der avered therefrom.

And,

And, fift, There are many several steps to, and degrees of, this distemper: we shall mention a few; as,

1. When they cannot come with confidence, and draw out of him by faith what their foul's case calleth for; they cannot with joy draw waters out of the wells of salvation, Isa. 12. 3. but keep at a distance, and entertain jealous thoughts of him: this is a degree of unbelief, making way for more.

2. When they cannot confidently affert and avow their interest in him, as the Church did, Isa. 12. 2. saying, Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength, and my song,

be also is become my Salvation.

3. When they much question if ever they have indeed laid hold on Christ, and so cannot go to him for the sup-

plies of their wants and necessities.

of God, and warranted to come to him, and lay hold upon him; yea, and they think they have many arguments whereby to maintain this their unbelief, and justify their keeping a-back from Christ.

5. Or when, if they look to him at all, it is with much mixture of faithless fears that they shall not be the better, or at least doubting whether it shall be to

their advantage or not.

6. This unbelief will advance further, and they may come to that, not only to conclude that they have no part or portion in him, but also to conclude that their case is desperate and irremediable; and so say, There is no more hope, they are cut off for their part, as Ezek. 37. 11. and so ly by as dead and forlorn.

7. Yea, they may come higher, and vent some desperate thoughts and expressions of God, to the great scandal

of the godly, and to the dishonour of God.

8. And yet more, they may come that length, to question all the promises, and cry out, with David, in his haste, Psal. 116.11. that all men are liars.

gospel to be nothing but a heap of delusions, and a cunningly devised sable; or but mere notions and sancies.

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for recovery from under unbelief. To. And at length come to question if there be a God that ruleth in the earth, over work aborder so

These are dreadful degrees and steps of this horrid diffemper, and enough to make all fieth tremble.

Let us fee, west, whence this cometh. The causes

hereof we may reduce to three heads;

if, The holy Lord hath a holy hand in this, and bath noble ends and deligns before him in this matter;

1. The Lord may think good to order matters thus, that he may magnify his power and grace in rescuing fuch as were returned to the very brink of hell, and feemed to many to be loft and irrecoverably gone.

2. That, in punishing them thus for giving way to the first motions of unbelief, he might warn all to guard against fuch an evil, and not to foster and give way to groundless complaints, nor entertain objections moved against their condition by the devil.

2. To warn all to walk circumspectly, and to work out their falvation with fear and trembling, not knowing

what may befal them ere they die.

4. To teach all to walk humbly, not knowing what advantage Satan may get of them ere all be done; and to fee their daily need of Christ to strengthen their faith; and to keep their grips of him faft.

5. So the Lord may think good to dispense so with some, that he may give a full proof of his wonderfully great parience and longanimity, in bearing with fuch,

and that fo long.

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6. As also to demonstrate his sovereignty, in measuring out his dispensations to his own, as he seeth will most glorify himself.

Next, Satan hath an active hand in this; for,

I. He raiseth clouds and mists in the believer, so that he cannot see the work of God within himself, and so is made to cry out, that he hath no grace, and that all was but delutions and imaginations, which he looked upon as grace before.

2. He raiseth up in them jealousies of God, and of all his ways, and puts a falle gloss and confiruction on all which God doth, to the end he may confirm them in their jealoufies which they have drunk in of God.

3. Having gained this ground, he worketh then upon their corruption with very great advantage; and thus driveth them from evil to worfe, and not only to question their present interest in Christ, but also to quit all hope for the time to come.

4. This being done, he drivesh the foul yet further,

and filleth it with prejudices against God and his glorious truths; and from this he can easily bring them to call all

in question.

and, when this is done, how easy is it with him to put them on desperate courses, and cause them speak wicked-

ly and desperately of God ?

6. And, when this is done, he can eafily darken the understanding, that the poor soul shall not see the glory of the gospel, and of the covenant of grace, nor the lustre and beauty of holiness: yea, and raise prejudices against the same, because there is no hope of partaking of the benefit thereof; and so bring them on to a plain questioning of all as mere delusions.

7. And, when he hath gotten them brought this length, he hath fair advantage to make them question if there be a God, and so drive them forward to atheism. And thus deceitfully he can carry the soul from one

flep to another. to loose, but a swing year and the

But, 3dly, There are many finful causes of this within the man's felf; as,

nountain frandeth fo ftrong, that it cannot be moved and this provoketh God to hide his face, as Pfal. 30.

2. Self-confidence, a concomitant of pride, supposing themselves to be so well rooted, that they cannot be shaken; whileas it were better for them to walk in seasons.

3. Want of watchfulness over a deceitful heart, and an evil beart of unbelief, that is still departing from the living God, Heb. 3. 12. It is good to be jealous here.

4. Giving way to doubtings and questionings too read ly at first. It is not good to tempt the Lord by parlying

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2 Go faith

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and Wro for recovery from under unbelief. 203 too much and too readily with Soron. Eve's practice might be a warning fufficient to us.

1. Not living in the light of their wants, and of their daily necessity of Christ; nor acting faith upon him daily, for the supplying of their wants: and, when fairly is not used, it may contract rule and be weakned, and come at length not to be difcerned. 6. Entertaining of jealous thoughts of God, and hearkning too readily to any thing that fofters and increases on confirms thefe. 7. Not delighting themselves in, and with pleasure dwelling on, the thoughts of Christ, of his offices, of the golpel, and promites; fo that these come at length to lose their beauty and glory in the soul, and have not the luftre that once they had: and this doth open a door to much mischief. 8. In a word, not walking with God, according to the gospel, provoketh the Lord to give them up to themcives for a time. We come now to the third particular. show how Christ is Life to the poor soul in this case, And, for the clearing of this, confider, 1. That Christ is the author and finisher of faith, Heb. 12. 2. and fo, as he did rebuke unbelief at the first, he can rebuke it again. 2. That he is the great Prophet, clearing up the goipel, and every thing that is necessary for us to know, bringing life and immortality to light by the gaspel, 2 Tim. 1. 10, and fo manifesting the lustre and beauty of

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the gospel.

3. He bringeth the promises home to the soul in their reality, excellency and truth, being the faithful Witself, and the Amer, Rev. 3. 14. and the confirmer of the promises, so that they are all yea and amen in him, a Gor. 1. 20. And this serveth to establish the soul in the soil.

faith, and to thut our thoughts of unbelief.

4. So doth he, hy his Spirit, dispel the mist and clouds which satar thro unbelief had raised in the foul.

4. And thereby also rebuketh those mistakes of God, and prejudices at him and his ways, which Satar hath. Wrought there, thro' corruption.

6. He

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6. He discovereth himself to be a ready help in time of trouble, the hope and anchor of falvarion, Heb. 6. 19. and a Priest living for ever to make intercession for poor finners, Heb. 7. 25.

7. And hereby he cleareth up to the poor foul a poffibility of help and relief; and thus rebuleth despair,

or preyenteth it.

8, He manifesteth himself to be the marrow and subflance of the gospel: and this maketh every line thereof pleafant and beautiful to the foul, and fo freeth them from the prejudices that they had at it.

9. 50, in manifesting himself in the gospel, he revealeth the Father, and the foul cometh to the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 6. and this faveth the foul from atheism.

10. When the foul cannot grip him, nor look to him, yet he can look to the foul, and by his look quicken and revive the foul, and warm the heart with love to him, and at length move and incline it fweetly to open to him; and thus grip and hold fast a lost sheep, yea, and bring it home again.

But, what should a foul do in such a case? To this (which is the fourth particularly to be spoken to) I an-

fwer,

1. They would strive against those evils formerly mentioned, which procured or occasioned this differper: a ftop should be put to these malignant humours.

2. They would be careful to lay again the foundation of folid knowledge of God, and of his glorious truths revealed in the gospel; and labour for the faith of God's truth and veracity: for, till this be, nothing can be right in the foul.

3. They would be throughly convinced of the treachery, deceitfulness and wickedness of their heart, that they may fee it is not worthy to be trufted, and that they may be jealous of it, and not hearken fo readily to it as they have done, especially seeing Satan can prompt it to speak for his advantage.

4. They would remember also, that it is divine help that can recever them, and cause them grip to the pro-

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mises, and lay hold on them of new again, as well as at first; and that of themselves they can do nothing.

sould eye Christ: and because this eying of Christ is faith, and their disease lieth most there, they would do as the Israelites did, who were stung in the eye with the serpents, they looked to the brazen serpent with the wounded and stung eye; so would they do with a sickly and almost dead faith, grip him, and, with an eye almost put out and made blind, look to him, knowing how ready he is to help, and what a tender heart he hath.

6. And, to confirm them in this resolution, they would take a new view of all the notable encouragements to believe, wherewith the whole gospel aboundeth.

7. And withal, fix on him, as the only author and finisher of faith.

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8. And, in a word, they would cast a wonderfully unbelieving and atheistical soul on him, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, and is wonderful in mercy and grace, and in all his ways. And thus may he at length, in his own time, and in the way that will most glorify himself, raise up that poor soul out of the grave of insidelity, wherein it was stinking; and so prove himself to be indeed the Resurrestion and the Life, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

We come now to speak to another case, which is,

## CHAP. XXV.

How Christ is to be made use of, as the Life, by one that is so dead and sensels, as he cannot know what to judge of himself, or his own case, except what is naught.

WE spoke something to this very case upon the matter, when we spoke of Christ as the Truth. Yet we shall speak a little to it here, but shall not inlarge particulars formerly mentioned: and therefore we shall speak a little to those five particulars; and so,

1. Shew what this diftemper is.

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2. Show whence it proceedeth, and how the foul cometh to fall into it.

3. Show how Christ, as the Life, bringeth about a recovery out of it.

4. Show how the foul is to be exercised, that it may

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obtain a recovery; and,

As to the first: Believers many times may be so dead, as not only not to see and know that they have an interest in Christ, and to be uncertain what to judge of themselves; but also be so carried away with prejudices and mistakes, as that they will judge no otherwise of themselves than that their case is naught; yea, and not only will deay or mis-call the good that God hath wrought in them by his Spirit, but also reason themselves to be out of the state of grace, and a stranger to saith and to the workings of the Spirit; and hereupon will come to call all delutions which sometime they had felt and seen in themselves: which is a said distemper, and which grace in life would free the soul from.

This proceedeth (which is the fecond particular) partly from God's hiding of his face, and changing his dispensations about them, and compassing them with clouds; and partly from themselves, and their own

mistakes: as,

of truth, but by the outward dispensations of God,

which change upon the best.

2. Judging their flate by the observable measure of grace within them; and so concluding their state bad, because they observe corruption prevailing now and then, and grace decaying; and they perceive no victory over temptations, nor growth in grace, &c.

3. Judging also their flate by others; and so they suppose that they cannot be believers, because they are so unlike to others, whom they judge true believers. This

is also to judge by a wrong rule.

4. Judging themselves by themselves, that is, because they look so unlike to what sometimes they were themselves, they conclude that their state cannot be good; which is also a wrong rule to judge their state by.

Beginning to try and examine their case and state, and coming to no close or issue, so that, when they have done, they are at unclear and uncertain what to judge of themselves as when they began. Or,

d. Taking little or no pains to try themselves seriously, as in the sight of God; but resting satisfied with a superficial trial, which can come to no good issue.

7: Trying and examining; but, thro the fleight of Salan, and because pitching upon wrong marks, coming to no good iffue, but condemning themselves without

ground.

8. There is another thing which occasioneth this misjudging, to wit, the want of distinctness and clearfield in covenanting with Christ, and the ignorance of the nature of true faving faith.

As to the third particular, How Christ is Life to the

believer in this cafe ?

I anfair, Christ manifesteth himself to be Life to

1. By fending the Spirit of life, that inlightneth, in-

formeth, perswadeth, and sealeth,

2. By actuating grace so in the soul, that it manifesteth itself, and evidenceth itself to be there; as the heat and burning of a fire will discover itself, without other tokens.

The fourth particular, to wit, How the foul should be exercised, or how it should employ Christ, for an outgate out of this? hath been abundantly cleared above, where we showed, that believers in this case would,

1. Be frequent in gripping Christ, and closing with him as their all-fufficient Mediator: and faith, thus frequently acting on him, may discover itself at length.

2. Look to Christ, that hath eye-falve, and is given

for a Witness.

3. Keep grips fast of him the they be in the dark, and walk on gripping to him.

4. Keep love fowards him and his working and in

exercife.

5. Beg of him to clear up their state by his Spirit, explaining the true marks of grace, and discovering the working of grace in the foul.

But

How to make use of Christ But it will be faid (and fo I come to the last particu-Jar) What if, after all this, I remain as formerly, as unable to judge aright of my flate as ever? Anf. Yet thou wouldst continue gripping Christ, loving him, looking to him, calling a loft dead foul with all thy wants upon him, and mind this as thy constant work, Yea, thou wouldft labour to be growing in these th direct acts of faith; and learn to submit to God herein, of knowing that those reflex acts are not absolutely necesfary; and that thou shouldst think it much if he bring thee to heaven at length, tho' covered with a cloud all So

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thy days.

Anf. I grant that: yet know, that every one getteth not clearness; and such as have it, have it not in the fame measure: And, must God give thee as much as he giveth to any other? What if thou wouldst not make that use of it that others do, but wax proud thereby, and forget thyfelf? therefore it will be best to give God liberty to dispense his favours as he will, and that thou be about thy commanded duty, the exercise of faith, love, fear, patience, &c.

Obj. 3. But, if at any time I got a fight of my case,

it would be some peace and satisfaction to me.

Anf. I grant that; and what knowest thou, but thou mayff also get that favour ere thou die? Why then wilt thou not wait his leifure? and ai word

Obj. 4. But the want of it in the mean time maketh me go heartlefly and discouragedly about commanded duties, and maketh that I cannot apply things diffinctly

Ans. Yet the word of command is the same, the offer is the same, and the encouragement is the same: Why then shouldst not thou be going on, leaning to Christ in the wilderness, even the thou want that comfortable fight?

Obj. 5. But it is one thing to want a clear fight of my flate, it is another thing to judge myself to be yet in the state of nature: and this is my case.

Anf. I grant this is the worst of the two: yet, what if thou mis-judge thyself without ground? Shoulds thou

under the missing of God's favour. thou not futter for thine own folly? and, whom canft thou blame but thyfelf? And, if thou judge so, thou cannot but know that it is thy duty to do the thing that thou supposest is not yet done, that is, run away to Christ for life and falvation, and rest on him, and abide there: and, if this were frequently renewed, the grounds of thy former mistake might be easily removed.

Yet further, I would add those few things;

Take no pleasure in debating against your own foul; for that is but to serve Satan's design.

2. Be not too rash or ready to drink-in prejudices against the work of God in your own souls: for that it

to collude with Satan against yourselves.

3. Make much of any little light he is pleased to give, were it but of one mark; and be not ill to please: for one scriptural mark, as love to the bretbren, may fufficiently evidence the thing.

4. See how thy foul would like the condition of fuch as are carnal, profane, careless in the matters of God: and if thy foul doth really abhor that, and thou wouldst not upon any account choose to be in such a case, thou mayft gather fomething from that to thy comfort.

enough of this case here.

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## CHAP. XXVI.

How is Christ, as the Life, to be aplied by a foul that mifsetb God's favour and countenance?

"He fixth case, that we shall speak a little to; is a deadness occasioned by the Lord's hiding of himfelf, who is their Life, and the fountain of life, Pfal. 36. 9. and whose loving-kindness is better than life, Plat. 63. 3. and in whose favour is their life, Psal. 30. 5. A case which the frequent complaints of the saints manifest to be rife enough. Concerning which we shall.

I. Shew some of the consequences of the Lord's hiding his face, whereby the foul's cafe will appear.

2. Shew the reasons of this dispensation.

3. Shew how Christis Life to the four in this case. And.

4. Point out the foul's duty, or how he is to make Ad complaint, P. 13. ule of Christ for a recovery.

As to the first, We may take notice of those particulars;

i. They complain of God's hiding of himself, and fortaking them, Pfal. 22. 1. My God, my God, why bast show for faken me? and, Pfal. 13. 3. How long will thou for fake me? &cc.

2. They cry out for a blink of his face, and get it not: for he hath withdrawn himself, Pfal. 13. 1. How long will thou bide thy face from me? Heman, Pfal. 88, cried out night and day, but yet God's face was hid, per. 1, 9, 14. The spoule seeketh long, Cant. 5. See Pfal. 22, 1, 2.

and. Hope deferred maketh their beart fick, Prov. 13. 12.

4. They are in the dark, and cannot tell why the Lord dispenseth so toward them: Wby (said Heman, Psal. 18. 14.) castest thou off my soul? why bidest thou thy face from me? They cannot understand wherefore it is. So Job cried out, Show me wherefore thou contendest with me, Job 10. 2.

5. They may also be walking in the mean while without light or counsel, so as they shall not know what to do. How long shall I take counsel in my foul? Plal. 13.2.

6. Moreover, they may have their heart filled with forrow; as we see, Pfal, 13.2. baving forrow in my beart, said David. He also saith, Pfal. 38. that his forrow was continually before him, v. 17. and Pfal. 116.3. I found

trouble and forrow.

7. They may be so, as that the sweet experiences of others may yield them no supply of comfort at present, Pfal. 22. 4, 5, 6. Our fathers trusted in these (said David) and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But that gave him no present case or comfort: for immediately he addeth, v. 6. But I am a worm and no man, a repreach of men, &cc.

8. Yea, all their own former experiences may yield them little folace; as we fee in the fame place, Pfall 22, 9, 10, compared with v. 14, 15. Thou art be (fays he, v. 9.) that took me out of the womb, &cc. And ye he complains, v. 14. that he was poured out like water and

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sind his bowes out of joins, that his beart was mobile in the midf of his bowels, &c.

of They may be brought near to a giving over all in despondency; and be brought, in their sense, to the

very duft of death, Pfal- 22. 16.

If it be enquired, Why the Lord dispenseth so with

hits own people?

We answer, (and this is the fecond particular) That he doth it for holy and wife reasons, whereof we may name a few; as,

1. To punish their carelesness and negligence; as we

fee he did with the Spoule, Cant. 5.

2. To chaftile them for their ill improving of his fatour and kindness when they had it; as the same passage evidenceth.

3. To check them for their fecurity and carnal confidence, as he did David, Pfal. 30. 6, 7. when he faid his mountain flood strong, and he should never be moved: then did the Lord hide his face, and he was troubled.

4. To try if their obedience to his commands he pure and conficientious, and not in a fort mercenary, because of his lifting up upon them the light of his countenance, and to see if conscience to a command driveth them to duty, when they are in the dark, and have no

encouragement,

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5. To put the graces of the Spirit to trial, and to exercise; as their faith, patience, hope, love, &c. Psal. 13, 5, 6. &c 22. 24.

6. To awaken them from their fecurity, and to fet them to a more diligent following of duty; as we fee

in the Spoule, Cant. 5.

7. To sharpen their defire and hunger after him, as that same instance cleareth.

Even in such a case as this, Christ is Life to the soul (which is the third particular)

1. By taking away the finful causes of such a distance, having laid down his life, and shed his blood, for the remission of their sigs; so that such a dispensation is not flowing from pure wrath, but is rather an act of mercy and love.

2. By

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2. By advocating the poor man's cause in heaven, where he is making intercession for his own, and thereby obtaining a delivery from that condition in God's own time, even the shining again of his countenance upon them.

3. By keeping life in, as to habitual grace, and by breathing thereupon; so that it becometh lively and

operative even in such a winter-day.

4. By supporting the soul under that dispensation, and keeping it from fainting, thro the secret influences of grace which he conveyeth into the soul; as he did to the poor woman of Canaan, Mat. 15.

5. By ferting the foul a-work, to use such means as God hath appointed for a recovery; as to cry, to plead, to long, to wait, &c. Their heart shall live that seek him.

6. By teaching the foul to submit to and acquiesce in what God doth, acknowledging his righteousness, greatness and sovereignty: and this quietness of heart is its life.

7. By keeping the heart fast to the covenant of grace, so that, whatever come, they will never quit that bargain, but they will trust in him, tho he should kill them; and they will adhere to the covenant of grace,

tho' they should be dragged through hell,

8. At length, when he feeth it fit and convenient, he quickneth, by drawing-by the vail, and filling the foul with joy in the light of God's countenance, and causing it to fing, as having the heart lifted up in the ways of the Lord.

As to the last particular, concerning the duty of a

foul in fuch a cafe; we fay,

1. He would humble himself under this dispensation, knowing that it is the great God with whom he hath to do, and that there is no contending with him, and that all flesh should stoop before him.

2. He would justify God in all that he doth, and fay with David, Psal. 22. 3. But thou art holy, O thou that

inhabitest the praises of Israel.

He would look upon himself as unworthy of the least of that kind: I am a worm (said David, Pfal. 22. 6.) and no man.

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4. He would fearch out his provocations, and run away to the fountain, the blood of Christ; that these may be purged away, and his conscience sprinkled from dead works, and his foul washen in the fountain opened to the house of David for fin and for uncleannels, to

5. He must also employ Christ, to discover to him more and more of his guiltiness, whereby he hath grieved the Spirit of God: and, as fins are discovered to him, he would repent of them, and run away with them to the blood that cleanfeth from all fin. This was Elibu's advice to Job, Chap. 34. 31, 32. Surely it is meet to be faid unto God, I bave born chaftifement, I will not offend, That which I fee not, teach thou me ; if I have done iniqui-

ty, I will do no more.

6. He would grip to Christ in the covenant, and rest there with joy and fatisfaction: he would hold that faft, that he may ride out the form in a dark night. The be make not my boufe to grow, faid David, 2 Sam. 23. 5. yet this was all his falvation, and all his defire, that he bad made with him an everlafting covenant, ordered in all things and fure. The Spoule took this course, when the could not get a fight of him whom her foul loved, Cant. 6. 20 and afferted her interest in him, I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.

7. He would be entertaining high and loving thoughts of God, commending him highly, let his dispensations be what they will. So did the Spouse, Cant. 5. 10,

-16.

9. This new manifestation, which he is seeking for, must be expected in and thro' Jesus, who is the true Tabernacle, and he who was represented by the mercyfeat. He is the only tryfting-place; in him alone will

the Father be feen.

<sup>8.</sup> He would earnestly seek after him. The Spouse did fo, Cant. 5. 6. the discouragement she met with at the hands of the watchmen did not put her off her purfuit, v. 7. but the continued, yea, was fick of love, ver. 8. and her looks had a prevailing power with him, as we fee, Cant. 6. 5. where the Bridegroom uttered that most astonishing word, Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.

How to make use of Christ

so. He would also look to him for ftrength and fup. port in the mean time; and for grace, that he may be from fainting, and may be helped to wait till he come, who knoweth the fittest scason wherein to appear.

But it will be faid, What if, after all this, we get no

outgate, but he hideth his face still from us?

I answer, Such would know, that life is one thing, and comfort is another thing t grace is one thing, and warm blinks of God's face is another. The one is necellary to the very being of a Christian, the other not, but only necessary to his comfortable being and therefore they should be content, if God give them grace, the they mils comfort for a time.

2. They would learn to commit that matter to Christ, who knoweth how to give that which is good, and what

is best for them.

3. They would be hanging on him for firength for dury, and in his firength fetting about every commanded duty, and be exercifing faith, love, patience, hope,

defire, Do.

4. Let the well-ordered covenant be all their falvation, and all their defire; and the' they should not get a comfortable blink of God's face fo long as they were here, yet, holding fast this covenant, they should at length be faved fouls: and what would they have more? and, when they get this, what will they mils ?

## CHAP. XXVII.

How fall one make use of Christ as the Life, when wrest. ting with an angry God because of fin?

Hat we may give some fatisfaction to this quettion, we fhall,

1. Shew what are the ingredients in this case, or what

useth to concur in this diftemper.

2. Shew fome reasons why the Lord is pleased to difpense thus with his people.

3. Shew how Christ is Life to the foul in this case.

4. Shew the believer's duty for a recovery : and,

5. Add a word or two of caution.

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under she fenfe of God's anger.

As to the first. There may be those parts of, or in-

1. God presenting their sins unto their view, so as they shall cry out, Our sin is ever before us. Psal. 51, 3, and say, as it is, Psal. 90.8. Thou bast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance and so cause them see the Lord contending for sin, as the Church did, Isa. 59. We rore all like bears, and mourn fore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for saluation, but it is far off from us: for our transferssions are multiplied before thee, and one sins testify any gainst us: for our transferssions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them, &cc.

2. Yea, God may bring upon them the iniquities of their youth, as Job speaketh, Chap. 13. 26. and so bring upon them, or suffer conscience to charge them with, their old sins, formerly repented of and pardoned. And this is more terrible. David is made to remember

his original fin, Pfal. 51.

3. And, as Job speaketh, Chap. 13. 17. God may seem to be scaling up all their fins in a bag, that none of them may be lost or fall by, without being taken notice of; and, as it were, be gathering them together in

an heap.

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4. He may pursue fore with figns of wrath and displeasure because of those fins; as we see in David, Pfal.

4. & 38. & 51. and in several others of his people chastned of the Lord because of their transgressions, whereof there are many instances in scripture.

5. Yea, and that for a confiderable time together, and cause them cry out, with David, Pfal. 4. 3.—But then,

O Lord, bow long !

6. And that not only with outward but also with inward plagues and firokes, as David's case cleareth in the

forecited Pfalms.

7. Yea, and not only themselves, but even their poflerity as David's child was smitten with death, and the posterity of Manasses, who found mercy himself, 2 Gbron. 33. 13. was carried into captivity for his sin, 2 Kings 23. 26, 27.

8. Further, the Lord may deprive them of all their

bemer joy and comfort; which made David cry out, Pfal, 51. 12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and grant me thy free Spirit. 9. And, which is yet more terrible, write their fin

apon their judgment; as when he caused the sword and wheredom follow David's house.

10. And finally, He may cause them sear utter offcasting, as Pfal. 51. 11. Cast me not away (said he) from sby prefence.

And this the Lord thinketh good to do (that we may speak a word to the second particular) for those and the

1. To discover to them, and to all the world, how just, holy and righteous a God he is, that cannot approve of or bear with fin even in his own children.

2. To make all fear and tremble before this great and holy God, who is terrible in his judgments, even when they come from a Father's hand, that is not pursuing in pure anger and wrath, but chaffning in love. Sure, all must think, that his dispensations with the wicked will be much more fearful and horrible, feeing they are not yet reconciled unto him thro' the blood of Jefus.

3. To prefs believers more earneftly in to Christ, that they may get a new extract of their pardon, and their

fouls washed in the blood of Jesus.

4. To teach them to walk more circumspectly afterward, and to guard more watchfully against Satan's temptations, and to employ Christ more as their Strength,

Li ght and louide.

5. To cause them see their great obligation to Jelus Chriff, for delivering them from that flate of wrath, wherein they were by nature as well as others, and would have lien in to all eternity, had not he redeemed them.

6. To exercise their faith, patience and hope, to see if in hope they will believe against hope, and lay hold on the strength of the Lord, that they may make peace with him, Ifa 27. 3. W. Lance of the parameter for the

7. To give a fresh proof of his wounderful mercy, grace, love and compassion, upholding the soul in the

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mean time, and at length pardoning them, and speaking peace to their souls thro the blood of Jesus.

But, as to the third particular, We may look on Christ, as the Life to the soul in this case, upon those

accounts;

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1. He hath satisfied justice, and so hath born the pure wrath of God due for their sins: he hath troden the wine-press alone, Isa. 63. 5. He was wounded for our transgrefsions, and bruised for our sins, Isa. 53. 5, 10. And therefore they drink not of this cup, which would make them drunk, and to stagger, and fall, and never rise again.

2. Yea, He hath procured that mercy and love shall accompany all those sharp dispensations, and that they shall flow from mercy; yea, and that they shall be as a covenanted blessing, promised in the covenant, Pfal. 89.

30, 31, 32, 33.

3. And sometimes he is pleased to let them see this clear difference betwixt the strokes they ly under, and the judgments of pure wrath which attend the wicked; and this supporteth the soul: for then he seeth, that those dispensations, how sharp soever they be, stall work together for good to him, and come from the hand of a gracious and loving Father, reconciled in the blood of Christ.

4. He is a Prince exalted to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel, Acts 5.31. Yea, he hath procured such a clause in the covenant, which is well-ordered in all things and sure, that, upon their renewing of faith and repentance, their after-sins shall be pardoned: and, besides the promises of faith and repentance in the covenant, his being a Prince exalted to give both, giving assurance of their receiving of both.

5. He cleareth to them their interest in the covenant, and their right to the promises of the covenant; and, thro' their closing with Christ by faith, he raiseth up their heart in hope, and causeth them to expect an outgate, even remission of their sins, and turning away of the displeasure in due time, thro' him: and this is a

great part of their life.

6. Being the author and finisher of faith, and a Prince

How to make use of Christ
to give repentance, he, by his Spirit, worketh up the sou
to a renewing of its grips of himself by faith, and to a
running to the death and blood of Christ for pardon
and washing; and worketh godly forrow in the heart:
whereupon followeth pardon, according to the gospelconstitution, tho the believer as yet perceiveth it not.
And sin being pardoned before God, conform to the tenor of the covenant of grace, the man is a living man,

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whatever fears of death he may be kept under for a time.

7. He helpeth also the soul to a justifying of God, and to a holy submissive frame of spirit, under that dispensation; so that they are willing to bear the indignation of the Lord, because they have sinned against him, Mic. 7. 9. and to wait for an outgate in God's own time; and to kiss the rod, and accept of the punishment of their sin.

8. When he seeth it fit for his own glory and their advantage, he speaketh peace at length to the soul, and saith, Son or daughter, he of good cheer, thy fins are forgiven thee. And then is the soul restored to life.

As to the fourth particular. The foul that is wrestling with an angry God for fin, and would make use of

Christ as the Life, would do those things;

1. He would look to Christ, as standing under God's curse in our room, and as satisfying justice for all the

elect, and for all their fins.

don is promised, upon the renewing of faith and re-

of both faith and repentance, and hang on him for both; and thus believe, that he may believe and repentance or lay his foul open to him, that he may work in him both repentance and faith.

a. He would flee to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks tiener things than the blood of Abel, that he may be washen and sprinkled with hystop, as David did, Plat. 51. 7.

give remission of fins, and as exalted for this end; and would fix his eye upon him, as now exalted in glory for this end.

6. He

under the fense of God's anger.

6. He would close with Christ of new, as his only all-sufficient Mediator; and having done this, and repented of his fins, whereby God hath been provoked, he would conclude thro faith, that a pardon is past in the court of heaven, conform to the tenor of the gospel, and wait on Christ until the intimation come.

As for the cautions which I promifed to speak to, in

the last place; take those few :

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1. Do not conclude there is no pardon, because there is no intimation thereof made to thy soul as yet. According to the dispensation of grace, condescended upon in the gospel, pardon is had immediately upon a soul's believing and repenting; but the intimation, sense and feeling of pardon is a distinct thing, and may, for several ends, be long kept up from the soul: sure, they go not always together.

2. Do not conclude there is no pardon, because the rod that was inflicted for fin is not as yet taken off. God pardoned David's fin, and did intimate the same to him by Nathan; and yet the sword did not depart from his house till he died: God can forgive, and yet take vengeance on their inventions, Plat. 99. 8.

3. Do not upon this ground question God's faithfulness, or conclude that God's covenant doth nor stand fast she is the same, and the covenant abideth fast and sirm;

but the change is in thee.

4. Do not think, that because thou hast once received Christ, that therefore, without any new act of faith on him, or of repentance towards God, thou shoulds immediately be pardoned of thy sins as soon as they are committed: for the gospel-method must be followed, and it should satisfy us.

#### CHAP. XXVIII.

No man cometh to the Father but by me.

This, being added for further confirmation of what was formerly faid, will point out unto us feveral necessary truths: as,

First, That it is most necessary to be found and clear

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in this fundamental point, of coming to God only in and thro' Christ: for,

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i. It is the whole marrow of the Gospel.

2. It is the hinge of all our falvation: Christ is the chief corner stone, Isa. 28.16. 1 Pet. 1.5, 6. and,

3. The only ground of all our folid and true peace and

comfort.

4. An error or a mistake here is most dangerous, ha-

zarding if not ruining all.

5. Satan endeavours mainly against this, raiseth up herelies, errors and salse opinions, and prompteth some to vent perplexing doubts and objections, and all to darken this cardinal point. So doth he muster up all his temptations for this end, at length, to keep poor souls from acquaintance with this way, and from making use of it, or entring into it.

6. Our corrupt hearts are most averse from it, and will close with any way, how troublesom, how expensive and costly soever it may seem to be, rather than

with this.

7. There are a multitude of false ways, as we did shew above.

All which clear up this necessity, and should teach us to be very diligent to win to acquaintance with it, and to make fure that we are in it, and to hold it fast, and to keep it pure in our practice, without mixing any thing with it, or corrupting of it.

Secondly, That it is no small difficulty to get this truth believed and practised, that thro' Christ alone we come to the Father. Therefore is the same thing afferted and

inculcated again, upon the matter: for,

1. Nature will not teach this way, it is far above nature.

2. Yea, our natural inclination is much against it, opposing it, and fighting against it.

3. This way is altogether contrary to that high esteem

which naturally all of us have of ourselves.

4. And is opposite to that pride of heart which na-

5. Yea, there is nothing in us by nature that will willingly

What the last words import. 325 lingly comply with this way; but, on the contrary, all is opposite thereunto.

6. And therefore it is the Christian's first lesson, to de-

ny himfelf.

The confideration of which should humble us, and make us very jealous of our own hearts and inclinations, and of all those courses which they are inclineable to and bent upon. And it should put us to try if ever we have overcome this difficulty, and have now all our hopes and comforts sounded on him, and on nothing else; and are up or down in our peace and joy, according as we win in to him, or are shur out from him; and in all our approaches to God, upon whatsoever account, are leaning to him and resting on him alone, expecting access, acceptance, and a hearing, only in him; and are quieted under all our fears and temptations with this, that Christ is our Way to the Father.

Thirdly, That even believers have need to have this

truth inculcated often: for,

1. Satan is bufy pulling them off this ground, by all

the wiles and temptations he can.

2. Their own corruption within, and the evil heart of unbelief, is always opposing this way, and drawing them off it.

3. Thro' the fleight of Satan, and the power of corruption, they are ofttimes declining from this pure go-

fpel-way.

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4. The experience of believers can tell, that, when they are at their best, it is a great work and exercise to them, to keep their heart right in this matter.

s. Is it not too oft feen that they are under the spiritual plague of formality, which stealeth them off their

feet here?

6. And, is it not found oftentimes, that they are too

too ready to lean to fomething befide Christ?

How ought all to be convinced of this, and humbled under the fense of it? And see also how necessary it is to be oft preaching on this subject, and to be oft thinking upon and studying this sundamental truth.

Fourthly, It should be a strong motive and incitement to us to make use of Christ as the Way to the Father,

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that

How to make ufe of Christ

that no man cometh to the Father but by him: for this may be looked upon as an argument, inforcing their

ule-making of him as the Way.

Fiftbly, It discovereth the ground of that truth, That there are but few that are faved; for none cometh to the Father but by him: few, in respect of the whole world, once hear of him; and, of fuch as hear of him, few have the true way of employing and applying him. as the Way to the Father, cleared up unto them: and again, of such as have the truth as it is in Jesus preached unto them, O how few go to him, and make use of him according to the truth, and believe and practife the truth!

Sixtbly, That in and thro' Christ alone we must come,

1. To the knowledge of the Father: for no man knoweth the Father but the Son; and he alone, who came out of the bosom of the Father, revealeth him.

2. To the favour and friendship of the Father; for he alone is our Peace, and in him alone is the Father

well pleased.

3. To the kingdom of the Father here; for he only is the door, John 10. and by his Spirit are we effectually called.

4. To the kingdom of the Father above; for he alone hath opened that door, and is entred into the holiest of all as our Forerunner, and is gone to prepare a place for us.

5. Thro' him alone must we address ourselves to the Father, and in our supplications, John 16. 23. Rev. 8. 3. in our thanksgiving, Rom. 1, 8. Col. 3. 17. and praise, Heb. 12. 15. Epb. 3. 21.

6. Thro him alone have we access, and an open door

to the Father, Epb. 2. 18. & 3. 21. Heb. 4. 16.

I shall only speak to one case here, viz.

## CHAP. XXIX.

How Should we make use of Chrift, in going to the Father, in prayer and other pieces of quor bip?

N short, foranswering of this question, I shall lay down those particulars;

1. There

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There would be a lively fense of the infinite diflance that is betwixt the great God and us finite creatures; and yet more, betwixt the holy God and us finful wretches.

2. There would be an eying of Christ as the great Peace-maker thro' his death and merits, having fatiffied justice, and reconciled sinners unto God; that so we may look on God now, no more as an enemy, but as

reconciled in Jefus.

3. There would be, sometimes at least, a more formal and explicite actual closing with Christ as ours, when we are going about such duties: and always an implicite and virtual embracing of him as our Mediator; or an habitual hanging upon him, and leaning to him, as our Mediator and Peace-maker.

4. There would be an eying of him as our great high Priest, now living for ever to make intercession for us, and to keep the door of heaven open to us: upon which account the apostle presset the Hebrews to come boldly to the throne of grace, Heb. 4. 14, 16. See also Heb.

7. 24, 25.

5. There would be a gripping to him even in reference to that particular act of worship, and a laying hold upon him, to speak so, as our Master-usher, to bring us by the hand in to the Father, as conscious of our own unworthiness.

6. There would be a confident leaning to him in our approaching; and so we would approach in him without fear or distinct and that not withstanding that we find not our souls in such a good frame as we would wish, yea, and guilt looking us in the face.

7. Thus would we roll all the difficulties that come in our way, and all the difcouragements which we meet with, on him, that he may take away the one and the

other, and help us over the one and the other.

8. As we would take an answer to all objections from him alone, and put him to remove all scruples and difficulties, and strengthen ourselves against all impediments and discouragements, alone in and thro him; so there would be the bringing of all our positive encourage-

How to make use of Christ ments from him alone, and all our hopes of coming speed with the Father should be grounded upon him.

9. We would expect all our welcome and acceptance with the Father, only in and thro Christ; and expect nothing for any thing in ourselves, not for our graces, good frame, preparation, or any thing of that kind. So we would not found our acceptance, nor our peace and satisfaction, on ourselves, nor on any thing we have or do; nor would we conclude our exclusion or want of acceptance, because we do not apprehend our frame so good as it ought to be: so we should not found our acceptance on our right performance of duties, for that is not Christ.

10. We would quiet ourselves on him alone, in all our approaches, whatever liveliness we find, or miss, in the duty. We are too much tickled and fain when duties go well with us, and troubled upon the other hand when it is not so; and the ground of all this is, because we lean too much to our own duties, and do not quiet ourselves on him alone; and hence it is, that we are oft quieted when we get the duty done and put by, tho we have not met with him there, nor gotten use made of him, as was necessary. All our comfort, peace and quiet would be founded on him alone.

11. We would look to him for the removal of all the discouragements that Satan casts in our way, while we are about this or that piece of worship, to put us back, or to cause us advance slowly and faintingly; and, casting

them all on him, go forward in our duty.

only in and thro' him, and lay all the weight of our hopes and expectation of a good answer only on him, 1 John 5, 12, 14, 15.

For caution, I would add a word or two:

and distinctly act all these things whenever he is going to God, or can distinctly perceive all these several acts: nor have I specified them, and particularly mentioned them thus, for this end; but to shew at some length, how Christ is to be employed in those acts of worship which we are called to perform; and that because we oftrimes

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of de ofitimes think the simple naming of him, and asking of things for his fake, is fufficient, tho our hearts lean more to some other thing than to him: and the confcientious Christian will find his foul, when he is rightly going about the duties of worship, looking towards Christ thus, fometimes more distinctly and explicitely as to one particular, and fometimes more as to another.

2. Tho' the believer cannot diffinctly act faith on Christ, all these ways, when he is going about commanded duties of worship; yet he would be sure to have his heart going out after Christ, as the only ground of his approaching to, and acceptance with, and of being heard by the Father; and to have his heart in fuch an habitual frame of refting on Christ, that really there may be a relying upon him all these ways, tho' not di-

flinctly difcerned.

3. Sometimes the believer will be called to be more distinct and explicite in looking to and resting upon Christ as to one particular, and sometimes more as to another. When Satan is diffwading him to go to God, because he is an infinite holy One, and he himself is but a finner; then he is called to act faith on Christ as the Mediator, making reconciliation betwixt God and finners: and when Satan is diffwading from approaching to God, because of their want of an interest in God; then should they act faith on Christ, and embrace him, according to the gospel, and rest there, and so approach. And when Satan casts up his unworthiness and former fins, to keep him aback, or to discourage him; then he is called to lay hold on Christ as the great high Priest and Advocate; and, casting that discouragement on him, to go forward. So likewife, when Satan is discouraging him in his duty, by bringing before him his fins, he should take this course. And when, because of his finful way of worshipping God and calling upon him, and other things, he is made to fear that all is in vain, that neither God regardeth him nor his service, and that he shall not come speed; then should he cast all the burden of his acceptance, and of obtaining what he asketh and defireth, on Christ, and quiet himself there; and so as

330 How to make use of Christ, &c. to the rest. And hence appeareth the usefulness of our branching out of this matter.

of Jesus; a looking to Christ, and resting upon Christ, according to the present case and necessity, in Christ; that is, by his strength and grace communicated to us by his Spirit. Then do we worship God in the Spirit, and in the newness of the Spirit, when all is done in the matter of worship in and thro' Jesus.



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